

# The Listener

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*Lent by Lord Middleton*  
'Elizabeth Littleton, Lady Willoughby' (1573), by George Gower: from the winter exhibition of British portraits at the Royal Academy, Burlington House, London

In this number:

Earth Satellites and the Astronomer (Michael Ovenden)

Man as a Whole (John U. Nef)

Bringing up Junior (James L. Henderson)





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# The Listener

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## The Vacuum in Russia's Power System

By THOMAS BARMAN, B.B.C. diplomatic correspondent

IT is now obvious that there is a vacuum at the very centre of the Russian power system. In no other way is it possible to explain the twists and turns of Soviet policy, or the sudden weaknesses, or the incredible contradictions that have been so apparent during the past two or three years. All the stars and planets that used to revolve round Stalin, each in his own separate and well-defined orbit, are now careering wildly through the universe. I sometimes wonder whether, among Russian civil servants of an older generation, there are not to be found people who might well speak with a sigh of regret of the good old days when Stalin was alive. For in those days, at least, there was only one master; and all his slaves and subordinates, at home and abroad, spoke with his voice. Such uncertainties as there were—and there were a great many—turned on one single will. To that extent, at least, life was simple and uncomplicated.

Today there are evidently a great many wills within the central leadership and an even greater number of uncertainties and contradictions. The origin of this confusion lies in events that go back a good deal further than the twentieth Congress of the Russian Communist Party, held in February of this year. At that Congress it was formally announced that the old idol was only an old gangster with a strain of hysteria in him. The confusion was born on an earlier day—on the day that Stalin died and when the new leaders agreed among themselves to reduce the power and influence of the secret police.

We need not suppose that they did this out of any sudden faith in the power of justice and the law, or out of any pity for the

sufferings of the Russian people. What obviously inspired their policy was a careful regard for their own safety. For it is clear that if the secret police are kept in a subordinate position, if they are under the control of a group of leaders instead of under the domination of one single individual, it is much more difficult for one man to establish a dictatorship. However wide their other differences, the men who survived Stalin were in wholehearted agreement on one cardinal principle, that they were not going to put up with another Stalin.

If you reduce the powers of the secret police, then the whole process of economic and industrial planning becomes far more difficult and needs far greater skill. If the party leader has an efficient secret police at his disposal with unrestricted powers of arrest, he does not have to worry much if his plans are a failure and people have to go short of food in consequence. If they start any trouble, he just has them taken away—and that is what Stalin did. The art of government is not so simple for the men who are now in control: the secret police have not got the same powers; they do not inspire the same fears; and the force of public opinion is now something that has to be reckoned with. So in Russia and throughout the Soviet Empire there has been a steady decline in the fear of authority, and therefore an increasing resistance to any government order that is widely thought to be unreasonable or unfair. What is probably far more serious, the generals and governors in the outlying provinces of the empire no longer have the same faith in the firmness of central policy.

Mr. Khrushchev's grand reconciliation with Marshal Tito



greatly extended the fog of uncertainty. It tempted all the states of eastern Europe, whose enforced loyalty to the Russians had gone completely unrewarded, and especially Poland and Hungary, to follow Yugoslavia's example. Why not—if it is so easy for the villain of yesterday to become the hero of today? Without any clear guidance from Moscow, neither Marshal Rokossovsky in Warsaw nor Mr. Rakosi in Budapest knew precisely when to yield and to what extent, and when to resist. Perhaps the Russians themselves did not know—or perhaps they failed to agree upon a policy. The fact that almost the whole of the inner group of Russian leaders went to Warsaw to argue with the Poles does indicate that the Russians were uncertain up to the very end; and also that not one of them had enough confidence in his colleagues to assume personal responsibility for a settlement that has turned out to be, even if only temporarily, a Russian retreat.

As for Hungary, the only surprising thing about the insurrection there is that it obviously surprised the Russians: they soon got themselves involved in stupid and threadbare falsehoods; and, spurred on by fear, they have now committed themselves to a military intervention that has undone much of the peace and good-

will talk on which they have spent so much time and money over the years. So even the old peace campaign that Stalin handled with such superb skill has lost its point and vigour in Mr. Khrushchev's clumsy hands. Mr. Khrushchev is now clearly on the point of making another turn. He is going to tell us that he made a mistake in rediscovering an old friend in Marshal Tito—for in Russian official eyes Marshal Tito is now again an old enemy. And Communist Parties throughout the world will be expected to cultivate equal feelings of hatred and contempt for the Yugoslav leader. Yet there is now no certainty that they will: for Russian tactics have imposed an unbearable strain upon their intelligence. It is only in Albania and France and Czechoslovakia that their leaders remain completely servile. Elsewhere the impressive unity of Communism has been shattered—the unity that Stalin enforced with his purges and his execution squads.

Stalin himself, according to Mr. Khrushchev, spoke of the difficulties that would inevitably overtake Russia after his death. 'What will happen without me?' he asked the members of the Political Bureau. 'You are blind like young kittens. The country will perish because you do not know how to recognise enemies'.

—*'From Our Own Correspondent' (Home Service)*

## Italian Communists and Hungary

By ROBERT STIMSON, B.B.C. Rome correspondent

**I**N a small town south of Naples, two young men—labourers by the look of them—were standing before some posters stuck on the wall of a shabby building. There was a Communist poster showing potatoes piled up in a street in a Hungarian town. It had a caption about how the Russians were bringing in food to 'help the victims of the fascist counter-revolution'. Alongside there was another poster, an anti-Communist poster, showing Russian tanks in Budapest and the havoc they had wrought.

The two Italians began to move slowly back and forth from one poster to the other, trying to make up their minds. At last, one of them turned to the other and said: 'What do you think?' The second man said: 'I'm going to hand in my card; I can never forgive them for that'.

In Italy one need not feel shy about butting into a conversation of this kind. I began to talk to the men, and they said they were convinced that the Russians had behaved atrociously. The three of us went off together in search of coffee, and in a small piazza we came across a stall, run by some nuns who were collecting money for the Hungarians through the Italian Red Cross. My companions stopped and made their contributions. How many Italians have resigned from what is the biggest Communist Party in western Europe no one yet knows; but it is clear that events in Hungary have divided the Italian Communists as never before. The party leader, Signor Togliatti, wholly misjudged the reactions of many members of the party when, early on, he described the Hungarian uprising as 'the work of reactionaries' who were trying to 'distort the process of democratisation'.

There were angry protests from Communists in all parts of the country. Thousands of letters criticising Signor Togliatti's attitude in the strongest terms poured into the offices of the party newspaper, *Unita*. A few key members of the staff of that newspaper resigned. A hundred and twenty intellectuals—the *élite* of the Communist Party—addressed a manifesto to *Unita* which the newspaper refused to publish, demanding that the party leadership should be completely reorganised. The Communist-dominated group of trade unions, led by the influential party member Signor Di Vittorio, ordered a five-minute stoppage of work to

commemorate the heroic stand of the Hungarian worker patriots.

Signor Togliatti has begun to have second thoughts about the Hungarian uprising. He now says it was due to the errors of the Hungarian Communist Party, which fell to pieces at a critical moment. The first intervention of Russian troops, according to Signor Togliatti's latest analysis, was not necessary, but the second intervention was.

In spite of this change in the Togliatti argument, there is a widespread and persistent belief here that the Italian Communist Party has irrevocably lost hundreds of thousands of votes in the next general election. This is certainly the opinion of the extreme left-wing Socialist leader, Signor Nenni, who has vigorously condemned Russian behaviour in Hungary. Signor Nenni has told the central committee of his party that on several fundamental issues he disagrees with the Communists, with whom he had worked doggedly for the past ten years. Does this mean that he is at last ready to give up the vaguely defined but effective working arrangement he has with the Italian Communists? The only answer I can give is that most Italians regard Signor Nenni as a brilliant exponent of the art of 'brinkmanship'—of hovering on the edge—and they will believe that he has taken the plunge only when they see him do it. But there is no doubt that at the moment Signor Nenni is very much at cross purposes with his old comrade, Signor Togliatti.—*'From Our Own Correspondent' (Home Service)*

**'THE LISTENER'**

next week will be a

**CHRISTMAS BOOK NUMBER**



# The French Climate of Opinion

By DARSIE GILLIE

**T**HE British think of the French as a people politically divided. The Anglo-French action in the Suez Canal area has provoked tense debates in the House of Commons, but so far none in the French National Assembly. There has been lively polemic between British newspapers. In France, amongst the dailies only Communist newspapers have sharply opposed government policy, while two or three others, none of them with big circulations, have limited themselves to analysis of objections to as well as arguments for the government policy. Yet the consequences of the Government's policy are no less important and can be no less grave for France than for Britain. Is this French unity natural or artificial? Why should the climate of opinion be so different on the two sides of the Channel?

Formation of opinion in any country is a complicated thing. There is a raw material of opinion, half-conscious inclinations, barely formulated anxieties, unanalysed expectations, routine sentimental satisfactions. Clearly felt and clearly expressed opinions are developed from these in ways that vary according to circumstances. The raw material of French opinion has necessarily been different from that in Britain, but I believe (for one can only guess) that it has been less different than the final crystallisation would suggest. For once the French political structure has favoured unity with little fundamental enquiry into the problem, while the British has favoured discussion and divergence.

The French elections held on January 2 of this year were a disappointment to both of the main groups concerned. Neither the parties of the centre and right, who were precariously in office, nor the parties of the left received the support they expected. The former lost fifty seats to the Poujadists, while the latter returned with about a quarter of the seats in the house. Beyond them, on the extreme left, were the Communists with another quarter of the seats. The remnants of the old coalition, though still the largest group of parties, had lost too many seats to continue in office. At all events the left-wing of the old coalition, the M.R.P., was anxious to demonstrate that it was not conservative at heart and as willing if not more willing to enter into alliance with the Socia-

lists again. But the Socialists and left-wing Radicals would have none of them.

The general picture given by the election was a desire for change. Socialists and left-wing Radicals were the only parties elected against

the former government that could be offered office. The Communists could not be treated as a completely French party and invited into the government, but the voters for the Communists, a quarter of the nation, had at least wished the government to be on the left. If both Communists and Poujadists were to be excluded from government, then, a mere counting of the seats in the Assembly made it clear there could be no government without the Socialists' approval. They were in a strong position to bargain. M. Mollet, invited by the President of the Republic, formed his Government, therefore, of Socialists, left-wing Radicals, and representatives of other small groups. He announced his intention of carrying out only a limited number of social reforms since he was far from disposing of a Socialist majority and had not even a purely Socialist Government, but at least he would do nothing unsocialist. The centre and right could vote against him and take upon themselves the responsibility of depriving France of all government, if they liked. He would do his duty.

The centre and right did not like. In fact once M. Mollet was installed they found considerable advantages in the situation. M. Mollet inherited the Algerian rebellion and early learned by a short tempestuous visit to Algeria that there might be not one

Algerian rebellion but two rival ones if he moved inadvisedly. During the few uncomfortable hours that he spent in Algiers it was a powerful mob of Europeans that booed him and threw tomatoes at him. The other enemy was still out of sight of the Algerian capital. He returned to Paris with a proper respect for the difficulties of the Algerian problem, and fell back upon a respectable democratic formula; France would not impose a unilateral solution on Algeria, and would only consult with freely elected representatives.

This put an end to the scheme of his predecessor M. Edgar Faure for an immediate round-table conference. It deprived him of all possibility of political



M. Mollet at the war memorial in Algiers during his visit last February: the wreath he placed there was afterwards torn to pieces by demonstrators



Carrying the flags of Morocco and of the Algerian rebel army a crowd marches down a street in Casablanca in protest at the capture by the French of five Algerian rebel leaders



initiative to end the rebellion—for until the rebellion was over there could be no elections. Since the Government had no one with whom it could discuss the future status of Algeria, it necessarily limited itself to secondary reforms. But it had the whole inescapable responsibility of providing the Governor-General with extraordinary powers to deal with the rebellion and of finding the reinforcements that he urgently needed. From the point of view of the centre and right, the situation was one of which there was no reason to complain. Had they been faced with these responsibilities, while the Socialists were in opposition, the latter would undoubtedly have made great difficulties about the special powers. They would have voiced objections to calling up 200,000 reservists and they would have called for a political programme for Algeria. With M. Mollet in office, only the Communists did these things—and even they pulled their punches for some time in the vain hope of luring the Socialists into a 'Popular Front' coalition.

### Nasser the Enemy of France

The fact that the reservists were called up created a new difficulty in the way of an unhampered discussion of the situation. The great sacrifice made by so many families, the departure for long months to a shooting war of young men just settling down into a career, and some of them just married, made it necessary to guard against the criticism that they were making this sacrifice in vain. From the Prime Minister downwards, government spokesmen declared that whatever the new statute of Algeria, it would preserve, indeed it would strengthen, the links with France. This, it became necessary to assert, was desired by the majority of Algerian Moslems, who certainly wanted great changes but not the departure of the French. Whence, then, the strength of the rebellion? From outside Algeria. There were the daily broadcasts of Cairo and Damascus; the supreme committee of the rebels sat in Cairo. It organised the smuggling of weapons with the help of the Egyptian Government. It sent young Algerians to Egyptian military camps for training in guerrilla warfare. Long before Colonel Nasser nationalised the Suez Canal, he had been growing into the position of an enemy of France, who had already broken the peace by his alleged responsibility for the continuance of the rebellion in Algeria and therefore for the fact that 400,000 young Frenchmen were there.

There were certainly doubts in a good many minds as to whether the Government was making the right approach to the Algerian problem. But the Socialist Party has a strong tradition of disciplined support to those of its members who are in office. The party's members had the more reason to observe discipline on this occasion because in 1954 they had been so badly split over the projected European Defence Community. The party Secretary-General was Prime Minister. To criticise him publicly was to take a grave responsibility; and apart from that he owed his situation in the party to his talent for political organisation. His authority could not easily be disputed. In April, M. Mendès-France resigned from the Government because he disapproved of the handling of the Algerian problem, but his criticisms concerned the manner rather than the matter of policy. They therefore made little impression on the general public. At all events, he did not try to drive them home, for the whole of his political strategy was based on building up a non-Communist left-wing alliance of parties. Socialists and radicals would provide the core. Such an alliance was in office. The other Radical Ministers had retained their posts. For Mendès-France as Radical leader to attempt to bring down the Government would not be the best way to consolidate the alliance and strengthen it for the future.

Throughout the summer, therefore, the two big non-Communist left-wing parties have refrained from discussing publicly the most important problem before France—that of her relations to the Moslem world, in the first instance North Africa, ultimately the whole of the Near and Middle East. The Government was committed to a long-term objective in Algeria that was not at variance with Socialist principles, democratisation, and social justice. But its immediate objective, the pacification of the country, differed scarcely at all from that of the centre and right. The question whether the Government's ultimate objective could be achieved within such a French framework as government spokesmen always pre-supposed was scarcely debated at all. For a Socialist or Radical to do so was to undermine the basis of their own coalition. For a conservative to do so would have been to attack his own party.

There was indeed criticism in two quarters. The Communists had denounced French policy in Algeria from the start, had organised demonstrations against the call-up of reservists, and even insubordination amongst them on their way out to Algeria. But opposition coming from the Communists could only discourage it in other quarters.

When Colonel Nasser's insulting laugh rang out announcing the nationalisation of the Canal, French anger and British anger were alike almost unanimous, but French anger had already a much wider, popular foundation. The laugh came from the man whom many Frenchmen and women already believed to bear a large part of the responsibility for 400,000 young men's absence, policing the vast and now perilous Algerian countryside from the sea coast to the Sahara. To strike at him seemed the best way to end the Algerian war. Indeed many responsible people, like M. Lacoste, the Minister Resident in Algeria, hastened to make it clear that in their opinion, it was the best, perhaps the only, way. Otherwise the sacrifices already made by the French in Algeria would have borne fruit. At last it seemed France's nearest ally, Britain, held the same view about the detestable Nasser. To France's Algerian motive for fighting him was added a new one of international importance. France therefore was not alone. To judge by the almost universal opinion about Egyptian military capacities, a joint action against him would be a light undertaking. With all the troops already on a war footing in Algeria, no further call-ups would be necessary. Indeed action against Colonel Nasser would be the best way to get the boys home quickly. On August 3 the French Assembly dispersed for the summer holidays after hearing speeches from the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister promising that Colonel Nasser would be brought to book. All the parties except the Communists supported this. There were to be no more parliamentary debates for nearly ten weeks, no occasion for second thoughts, no review of the arguments before the public.

The public did indeed become impatient after the conference of the eighteen. The Prime Minister declared himself no less disappointed and impatient. Alas, allies were wavering—though not, he said, Britain. Doubts as to the wisdom of the policy were growing, but more important were the critics who asked why promises had not been fulfilled. To these the Government replied in the middle of October that the struggle had not yet been played out, that France still had unsuspected cards in her hands, and that it was too early to judge the outcome. Then, at the end of October, came two incidents. One of these seemed to confirm the rightness of the Government's attitude to Colonel Nasser, and the other stimulated a kind of gay unthinking combativity in the public and confirmed within the Government the strong position of those who thought the best defence of France's position was combativity, towards Colonel Nasser, towards Morocco and Tunisia, and towards the Algerian rebels.

The first incident was the capture off the coast of Algeria of the gun-running ship *Athos* which had been loaded by Egyptian soldiers in uniform in the naval port of Alexandria. The second was the capture of the five Algerian rebel leaders while flying from Morocco to Tunis by way of the Balearic Islands. In the future Frenchmen are not likely to look back at this incident with pride or pleasure. It has certainly cost France very dear in Morocco and Tunisia, but it is still maintained in some quarters that it has played a big part in demoralising the rebels in Algeria. But our business at the moment is with French opinion. Instead of France being the victim of a trick, she had played a trick on someone else: not a very noble attitude, but comprehensible. It stimulated the hope that France could negotiate from strength with the Algerian malcontents after putting down the rebellion. The capture of the rebel leaders was the last event to shape French opinion, before M. Mollet asked the Assembly to approve the ultimatum to Israel and Egypt. Theoretically the ultimatum dealt with a new situation, but in fact the Deputies and the general public took it as a delayed fulfilment of the promise given on August 3 by M. Mollet and then so warmly applauded. The promise had been given at the request of the Assembly. Neither the request nor the promise had ever been cancelled. There was no party in the Assembly, except the Communists, which could criticise the Government's course without criticising its own attitude.

### British Attitude a Bitter Pill

Events came thick and fast, showing that there were a good many considerations that might usefully have been meditated—the attitude of the United Nations, the attitude of America, the attitude of Russia, and finally—a bitter pill—the attitude of Britain agreeing to a cease-fire long before the immediate aim of the Franco-British force had been achieved. Yet here we are, three weeks after the event\*, and still no debate, still no large scale re-examination of the attitudes which have shaped French policy for a year.

Events in Hungary, on the other hand, have been debated for a whole afternoon and evening in the Assembly. Six former Prime Ministers and several members of the Government walked in a procession to lay



wreaths in honour of the Hungarian dead under the Arc de Triomphe. The fact that Franco-British preoccupation with Egypt must have facilitated Russian aggression in Hungary has been noted by some commentators, but far more general has been anger with the United Nations for having devoted more time and energy to the Egyptian situation than to the Hungarian. There has been a deep current of feeling about Hungary in France, causing a moral crisis amongst those who have thought there was no good reason to keep the Communist Party at arm's length, amongst sympathisers with the Communist Party, and even amongst some of the party's members. But the French Communist Party remains the least de-Stalinised of all Communist Parties. The crimes committed in Hungary have only encouraged it in an aggressive effrontery. The Hungarian tragedy and the French Communist line about it has helped to divert people's minds from examining the line of thinking that led to Port Said. It has made it easier for the Government to say some surprising things without being howled down in derision: M. Mollet for instance solemnly told the Assembly that the cease-fire had been ordered because France and Britain had already reached their objective.

Hungary is making it easier for French people to put the blame on others, including the United Nations, for the difficulties into which Franco-British policy has now run. Hungary has also most fortunately deprived the French Communist Party of all chance of exploiting the

fact that it alone criticised in the Assembly the Government's policy.

The French are reputed to be a rational nation; why this irrational hesitation to re-examine the principles of their own policy? Freud has told us that we hide from ourselves our most painful problems. There is plenty that will be painful in the French re-assessment. The Government had made the most categorical promises on August 3 and every party except the Communists had approved them. But why this unanimity? Because before that there had been unanimity in avoiding the issue over Algeria. The key to French policy all this year has been the rejection of the Faure Government's suggestion (a rather tentative suggestion, it is true) of a round-table conference, which would have forced the full gravity of the Algerian problem on France. Any re-assessment must face the fact that the demand for Algerian independence, or possibly for participation in a North African union, is now no longer something that can be fended off by solemn statements about the links between Algeria and France.

Can France herself afford either the military or the financial effort necessary to maintain those links? Can France afford to neglect her part as a Nato Power and keep troops in Africa instead of on the Rhine? Can she afford to sacrifice her own and her allies' relations with Islam, in order that Algeria should remain in some sense French? These are no easy questions to face with 1,000,000 French citizens in Algeria.—*From a talk in the Third Programme*

## Can Aerial Inspection be Effective?

By Air Marshal SIR VICTOR GODDARD

**P**RESIDENT EISENHOWER'S proposal at the 'Summit Talks' at Geneva was that Russians should be free to take photographs of the United States in American aeroplanes, and that Americans should do the same over the U.S.S.R. in Russian aeroplanes. The object was to reduce the risks of sudden attack from the air.

The new Kremlin counter-proposal is that the question of aerial reconnaissances should be considered (and linked with the early departure of foreign forces from European countries) 'only in an area 500 miles on either side of the line that divides Germany into East and West. This area does not, of course, include the U.S.A. and U.S.S.R.; it does include ten other countries; and it embraces the eastern half of England where the Anglo-American strategic air forces are based and most of the deployment area of the Nato air and land defences of north-western Europe. I was not surprised by the Eisenhower proposal. When I was representing the Royal Air Force in Washington, and there were questions of secrecy of weapons to be discussed, General Eisenhower made it clear that in his view secrecy was only a strength for the weak: it was a weakness for the strong. That is typically American: tell the world; if you have got something, let them know it! On the other hand, the history of Russia and of the U.S.S.R. has been largely a history of weakness: internal weakness. Hence their addiction to secrecy.

The questions I want to examine briefly are these: would it be a good thing that there should be a mutual aerial inspection of other countries? If there were aerial inspection would it be a safeguard? In my view the answer in both cases could be 'yes'. I know that there is little or no present possibility of an international air reconnaissance force such as Kipling visualised sixty years ago in his futuristic story 'As Easy as A.B.C.' But how much trouble we might all have been saved if, a month ago, the world had known that in the Sinai Desert, close by the borders of Israel, there was already deployed an armoured force of about two divisions and that they were deployed not in the defensive positions designed for the Egyptians by German military advisers, but in the typical alignments of an offensive force poised for attack. The world is entitled to have that sort of factual information: only by such means can it make sound judgements of what is what. That is the kind of thing that President Eisenhower was thinking of with his 'open skies' proposal. That is the easiest kind of evidence for aerial supervision to provide.

Most people will remember how the V1 plan was disclosed. First a stray V1 landed in Sweden. Where could it have come from? Photo-

graphy proved that it came from Peenemunde and provided a picture of a 'launching-site': that gave the clue to the whole plan, which was photographed stage by stage.

Air photography is an advanced technology: it is widely used for surveys of all kinds and, in the hands of experts, provides rapidly the most detailed information. Photography, in conjunction with radio techniques, has opened a new field in geophysical survey work. By air photography the secrets of nature and military secrets are exposed not so much from the discovery of objects as from the discovery of evidence. For instance, many years ago I took an aerial photograph of Stonehenge and showed it to an archeologist. He had told me that the mystery of how those great stones from Wales had got to the site of the ring could be partly explained: they could have been floated by sea and up the Avon. But how they got overland to the site from the bed of the Avon was unsolved. In fact that photograph showed lines which the eye could not see; and these gave evidence of a canal of thousands of years ago. How much easier, then, to detect evidence of military activity, even below the surface of the earth, which has taken place in recent weeks or months.

There could be deception: but the interpreters of air photographs are cunning, too! Dummies are not so easily dummies to them. But why worry too much about deception? Who is trying to deceive whom about what? In the West the object of the Nato Powers is surely to make their agreed policy of the 'great deterrent' fully effective. They most of all want the world to know the scale of the offensive and defensive might which is available for action: they want the rest of the world to be really afraid of provoking war. In my view there is great virtue in gradually taking out of military statesmanship the outdated art of poker-playing. Surprise is an invaluable stratagem of war: but we are not considering war; we are considering the prevention of war. And, as we have seen recently, military surprises in peace time are liable to catch public opinion on the wrong foot.

A new idea has come to the top. It will remain only an idea if national leaders see more security in secrecy and deception than in openness and strength. But would it not be logical that out of the small United Nations ground force, which Suez has created, there should evolve a United Nations system of aerial observation? Great ends often have small beginnings, as we of this generation of air power know full well. It is certain that there can be no acceptable supra-national force without, first, a supra-national means of knowing at first hand what nations are doing within their own borders. Aggression, like charity, begins at home.—*'At Home and Abroad' (Home Service)*



# The Listener

## What They Are Saying

Foreign broadcasts on international affairs

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## In Search of Man

IN an illuminating talk, which is published elsewhere in this number, Professor J. U. Nef tells us about an experiment in broadening higher education for which he and some of his colleagues are responsible in the University of Chicago. This may come as a surprise to some of us ignorant British who think of Chicago as the home of canned meat and gangsters, but it is of course one of the most attractive cities in America and its university is distinguished. Professor Nef himself is well known on this side of the Atlantic as an able economic historian whose book on the rise of the British coal industry has become a standard work. He spent several years over here and tells us in his talk how when he returned to the United States he was struck both by the materialist standards that then prevailed and by the extreme specialisation practised in American universities. An Englishman might say that materialism was also dominant over here at that time. (Professor Nef is speaking of the nineteen-twenties.) But specialisation was probably less marked. Conversation in an Oxford or Cambridge Common Room certainly ranged over wide fields and in the newer universities there was no lack of cultural intercourse.

In any case Professor Nef took the lesson to heart and the foundation of the Committee on Social Thought at Chicago—the original intention was to call it the Committee on Civilisation—was the result. It may be said that over here we too are now becoming aware of the existence of a not dissimilar problem. Forty years ago, when the Greats, Modern History, and English Schools still preponderated at Oxford and many future headmasters and headmistresses received their final education in them, there was probably less specialisation in higher education than there is today. In so far as an educational slant or bias prevailed, it was in the direction of the arts. But now we live in a world which is deeply concerned with the sciences and with technology, and the cry in many quarters is in favour of more science and more technologists—a national need about which Sir Edward Appleton is speaking in his Reith Lectures. The case for that is understandable and plausible. Nevertheless the danger is that it may upset the values of our civilisation. Those who believe in the importance of the arts have been driven upon the defensive. Professional historians and literary critics console themselves with the thought that they too are scientists. Philosophers either confine themselves to logic chopping or (as a recent talk printed in THE LISTENER revealed) have doubts about their own subject.

One must not exaggerate the situation. It may be remembered that some writers, Dr. Toynbee and Bertrand Russell, for example, whose work covers a wide range, are popular and are read by those whose interests are highly specialised. The so-called 'Keele experiment' (about which Mr. W. A. Campbell Stewart spoke in the Third Programme last week) is a fascinating effort by a new university to broaden the basis of higher education. Though we are not rich enough to afford an Institute of Advanced Studies, as at Princeton, where so many of our scholars have enjoyed hospitality, All Souls, Oxford, still guards the heritage of culture. But we do well to be reminded by an American that 'industrial man is not a god . . . he is not even a man'. It may be true in Britain too that 'it is our task to find man again'. At any rate obviously science alone is insufficient for the full life.

CONSIDERABLE PUBLICITY was given by the Soviet radio to the General Assembly debate in which an overwhelming majority of United Nations delegates condemned the deportation of Hungarians and adopted a resolution for an extension of help to refugees. A Moscow home service commentator said that the U.S. representative had tried to produce the impression that the U.S.A. wished to assist those who had become homeless, but, he added:

The facts testify otherwise. Refugees in camps are being sorted out according to definite criteria which have nothing in common with humanitarian principles . . . The British representative permitted himself to make an obviously slanderous remark about the Soviet Union. This is quite understandable. Britain wants to divert public attention from the actual aggression and barbarism of which she is guilty in Egypt.

Another Russian commentator had this to say on the question of deportations and the conduct of the Soviet troops in Hungary:

The enemy is now energetically spreading provocative rumours about the deportation of Hungarian youth to the Soviet Union and about the horrors of Siberia. Among those who are alleged to have been deported are thousands who have fled to Austria. Soviet troops, brought up in the spirit of the friendship of the peoples and of proletarian internationalism, have fulfilled their sacred duty to the workers of Hungary and to all freedom-loving peoples. They have helped the Hungarian working people to save their conquests. In this lies the great, noble, and truly humane mission of the Soviet soldiers.

Examining the general attitude of the United Nations Assembly towards the question of Hungary, another Moscow speaker said:

The U.N. should recognise that Soviet troops must not leave Hungary before the re-establishment of normal life by the Hungarian people themselves. Hungary now has the possibility of reorganising her political life in accordance with the ideas of a Popular Front consisting of a coalition of many parties on the basis of the results of free elections. For Hungary, the idea of neutrality could only be contemplated if there were no reactionary forces next to her frontiers.

Another topic for radio comment has been the speech made by President Tito at Pula, in which he outlined the Yugoslav attitude to international problems, and expressed qualified approval of the Soviet intervention in Hungary. Criticising his speech, a Moscow home service commentator said:

Tito even stressed that the future depends on whether the new policy started by Yugoslavia will prevail in the Communist parties. These assertions are closely connected with articles in the Yugoslav press expressing the point of view, increasingly becoming dominant, that the Yugoslav road to socialism is the only correct road. Such an attitude is in complete opposition to Marxist-Leninist principles. His attempt to divide Communist parties into Stalinist and anti-Stalinist can only objectively harm the Communist movement.

Belgrade radio, in its turn, denied that President Tito had conceived such a division. The unity of the international workers' movement had always been dear to Yugoslav Communists, but:

such unity must be based on healthy foundations and not on power hegemony, and dictation, as was Stalin's idea. Such unity presupposes honest, frank, and bold discussion, not a strangulation of discussion and a closing of eyes to facts. If there had been more Communist discussion and a bolder approach to reality in the past, such tragic events as those in Hungary would probably never occur.

The resolution of the United Nations Assembly that Britain, France, and Israel should withdraw their troops from Egypt has resulted in accusations from eastern radio services that the three countries are reluctant to do so. Moscow radio claimed that:

The British Government is prepared to use every pretext to delay the withdrawal of British troops in Egyptian territory. It seems that without the sanction of the United Nations and without the consent of Egypt, the British Government is taking upon itself the clearance of the Canal.

Cairo home service stated that the 'anxiety' in Britain and France about the Soviet 'ultimatums' had been caused by an intention to procrastinate over withdrawing their forces. The commentator added:

Since Russia is determined to implement the U.N. resolution, she will not prevent the departure of volunteers to Egypt to help crush this aggression. China and the majority of the countries of the Asian-African bloc all support Russia in this respect.



# Did You Hear That?

## SIEGE OF SIDNEY STREET RECALLED

JAMES BONE in 'Town and Country' recalled reporting the famous battle of Sidney Street in the East End of London at a house which has recently been pulled down.

'The Siege of Sidney Street', he said, 'was a new sensation to London. It was long before our two crashing terrible wars and before America had acquainted us in our own cinemas with the gun battles of Chicago and New York thugs. And many people then thought of the East End simply as where Jack the Ripper had done his outrages. It was, so to speak, the Sherlock Holmes period when I was told to take a hansom—though there were a few taxicabs then—and go to Sidney Street where anarchists, "foreigners", were fighting it out with policemen and soldiers. What I remember best is how people of the West End and the City hurried there in trains and buses and cabs as to a show—to be in time at the ringside.

'The neighbourhood was crammed but I got to the side door of a small public house, called, I think, the Rising Sun, and I gave a half-sovereign to go on the roof. I recall the unconcealed joy of the landlord who had never dreamt that life in his drab little pub would ever have yielded such a golden harvest! I climbed up a cranky stair to a hatchway on to the roof. I wonder that the old roof did not collapse under such a topweight of journalists and sightseers.

'We lurked behind chimney-stacks, as there was some firing going on. We looked down on a dingy, sullen, little street and could see the two windows on the first floor where the desperadoes were. I could see two Scots Guardsmen at a corner, lying on newspaper bills with rifles ready, but I could not see the Home Secretary, Mr. Winston Churchill, who was there. Some shots spat from the windows and bursts of firing came from Law and Order down below. About one o'clock smoke oozed from the blackened window sockets and soon we saw flames. Shooting had ceased. I thought that 100 Sidney Street was being burnt down and that all that remained of the hate and fury of the two men inside would be two little heaps of ashes. I did not know that the small building still stood there, till the other day when it was cleared away.

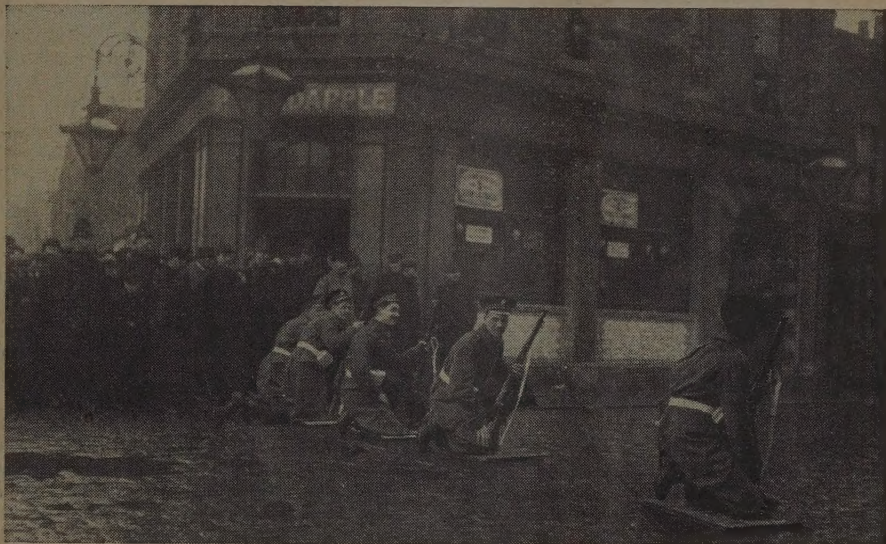
'One policeman was wounded and a journalist had a bullet hole in his overcoat. The mysterious 'Peter the Painter', for whose arrest £500 were offered, was thought to be in the besieged house; but he was not. He was never found and was believed to have reached his native Russia'.

## THE THEATRE IN LENINGRAD

'The glories of St. Petersburg have faded', said GEOFFREY BENNETT in a Third Programme talk, 'but Leningrad remains the second city in the U.S.S.R. and it still has some twenty theatres. Of these the Kirov, once the world-famous Maryinsky, is the most important. It was opened in 1886, and is about the same size as Covent Garden.

'The Kirov Theatre's repertoire of opera and ballet is similar to the Bolshoi's. But although its company includes several creditable soloists, their performances do

not reach the same high standard as those to be seen in Moscow: they are clearly those of a large provincial city. Nevertheless, in addition to the nostalgic pleasure of visiting such a famous building, I have pleasant memories of watching the Kirov Company dance several ballets which I could not see in Moscow: the classical



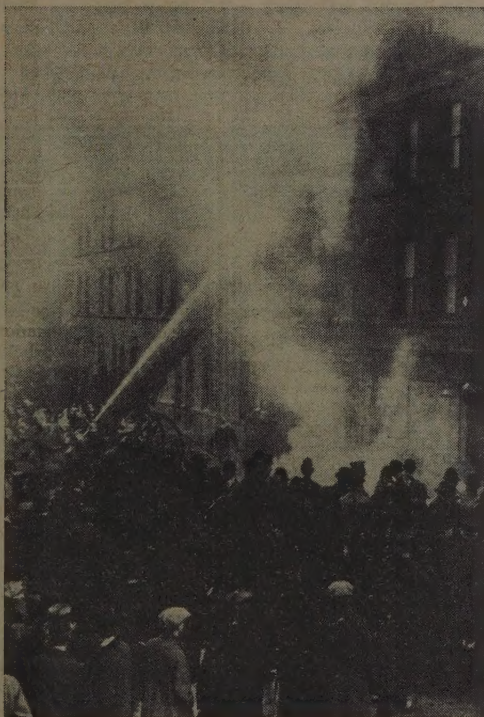
Scots Guards with rifles ready during the siege of Sidney Street in December 1910

'Chopiniana', for example, and Khatchaturian's exciting "Gayaneh".

'Of opera at the Kirov I remember best a performance of Tchaikovsky's "Queen of Spades" last October, for a most unusual reason. As the curtain rose at eight, so did the river Neva under the influence of a strong westerly gale. For the first time since 1924, the Neva and the canals of Leningrad overflowed their banks. The floods isolated the Maryinsky and, for fear that water would enter the auditorium, the opera was abruptly curtailed at the end of the first act, long before Lisa could say farewell to life beneath the surface of the same river. My return to my hotel through the swirling waters on the back of a passing lorry was a vivid reminder of the disaster which nearly befell the hero of another of Pushkin's stories, "The Bronze Horseman", on just such a night more than a century ago.

'Like the Bolshoi, the Kirov Theatre has its own ballet school. In the past this produced, amongst many famous ballerinas, Pavlova, Lydia Kyasht and, happily still with us, Karsavina, who portrayed the school so vividly in her book *Theatre Street*. More recently it has given to the Bolshoi its great *première danseuse étoile*, Ulanova—proof that though the Russian regime has changed the Maryinsky tradition lives on.

'Leningrad's other opera house is the Maly Musical. This theatre was built more than a hundred years ago and is small by Russian standards, but it has one of the most beautiful auditoriums in all Europe. Perfectly proportioned, its elaborate white, silver, and flame *décor* reminds one of the sort of transformation that Oliver Messel achieves for gala performances at Covent Garden.



Crowds watch firemen playing a hose on a burning building in Sidney Street

Photographs: 'Picture Post' Library



'The Maly's repertoire is more adventurous than the Kirov's. I saw Tchaikovsky's seldom-played "Little Shoes" there, and Prokofiev's splendid "War and Peace". "Little Shoes" has an amusing plot. A peasant girl will only marry her beau if he procures for her a pair of Catherine the Great's shoes. He is undeterred by the apparent impossibility of this task, and he captures the devil in a sack. The devil, to obtain his release, consents to present him to the Empress at a court ball and thus gives him the chance, which he seizes, to ask for her shoes. So the story has a happy ending. This early work of Tchaikovsky's is certainly worth seeing when played by Russians, with their strong powers of characterisation. But the score perhaps lacks the quality to justify a production elsewhere'.

### PLEASURES OF AN ACTOR'S WIFE

FAITH NICHOLLS, the wife of Anthony Nicholls, who has been acting in the Shakespeare season at Stratford-upon-Avon, while living at Avoncliffe, spoke of the pleasures of an actor's wife in a talk in the Midland Home Service.

'Intensive rehearsal for the first two plays, "Hamlet" and "The Merchant of Venice", she said, 'started a week after we arrived, with the evenings spent mainly studying and polishing the two parts so soon to follow each other.

'The household at these times centres entirely on Tony who mutters and booms his way about in a sort of haze. We have meals at the oddest hours, and I am prepared to stop whatever I am doing (short of a *soufflé*) to take him through his lines or discuss characterisation and new ideas that he or the producer have had during rehearsal. And always there is coffee to be made, even at midnight, if he is really wound up and not ready for bed.

'Actors are rather like springs at this time, tightly wound up, and it is no good just putting a stiff lid on them and flattening them out: they must unwind; although there are occasions when a firm "Enough" should be said and meant. I am talking about real, hard-working professional actors—not those who imagine that a large and tiresome temperament is a good enough substitute for experience.

'Rehearsal time at Stratford I shall remember for many things; and for one in particular, which could belong to no other theatre—arriving practically at the stage door in a punt, that is, during the summer. We would moor the punt at the theatre, and Tony would go in to rehearsal and I to have a cup of coffee in the Green Room. Incidentally, I should say here that few theatres in London possess this luxury, and those that do do not encourage wives.

'After a few visits I began to notice something which amused me very much. Time and again I would go in and see the actors who were rehearsing tragic roles sitting about laughing and talking. Then I would look round for the comics. There they were, crouched in miserable little heaps talking in low mutters, drawing in their breath and shaking their heads slowly from side to side.

'Here at the Green Room we arrange drives in the gentle and lovely Warwickshire countryside, or small supper parties where we promise each other it will not be a late night—but we sit and talk and and talk, nothing but shop. That I love. This aspect of life at Stratford is entirely different from filming or theatre work in the West End, where, on leaving the stage door one need never meet or know the company

at all well, and as a non-playing wife I seldom do, or only the few who may be personal friends. But here, the atmosphere is much more intimate and friendly, and the actors seemed interested in what the wives do.

'In the main, I find actors amazingly warm, good-natured, and understanding in the running of a home, and what endears them to me more than anything is their almost universal appreciation of good food. I do not know of any actor who is not a joy to cook for'.

### A MUSEUM THAT CHILDREN LIKE

'I have always found that the most interesting museums are what you might call the specialists', said RUTH DREW in 'London Calling Asia', 'the small ones which centre their attention on a particular subject, and choose their exhibits carefully to illustrate it.

'One of my favourites in this field is the Geffrye Museum. The Geffrye began as a museum to interest furniture-makers and designers, but now its scope has been widened considerably, so that it has a fascination for everyone, including children.

'The furniture is shown in a series of period rooms—rooms which date from about 1600 to the present-day. And, as you walk through them, you see not only what life in England was like in past centuries, you see how it has developed; how changing times affected furniture design, how one style followed logically on another. When you arrive at the last room you find yourself completely up to date—looking at a contemporary living-room resplendent with a gleaming television set, and a compact little kitchen with an electric cooker and refrigerator. The curator, by the way, keeps these rooms constantly abreast of good modern design. She believes that a museum must relate the things it shows to the life we lead today. And she thinks that, by looking at new furniture in company with old, we learn a great deal—we educate our eyes and sharpen our judgement by comparison. As she puts it: "We like to think that our period furniture highlights our modern".

'London has many museums where you can see examples of the best furniture of all periods—show-pieces, in fact, from the homes of the rich. But, at the Geffrye, you see ordinary furniture, chairs and tables which were used by ordinary people, and everything arranged naturally in ordinary rooms. So it needs very little imagination to whisk yourself back to life in an Elizabethan kitchen, or in an elegant eighteenth-century music-room. The illusion is helped because nothing is plastered with descriptive labels. Instead there are panels near at hand, full of information about the actual exhibits, about famous people of the day, about the social background of the generations who went to bed by these rushlights and cooked on these iron spits and rattled these flower-patterned Victorian tea-cups.

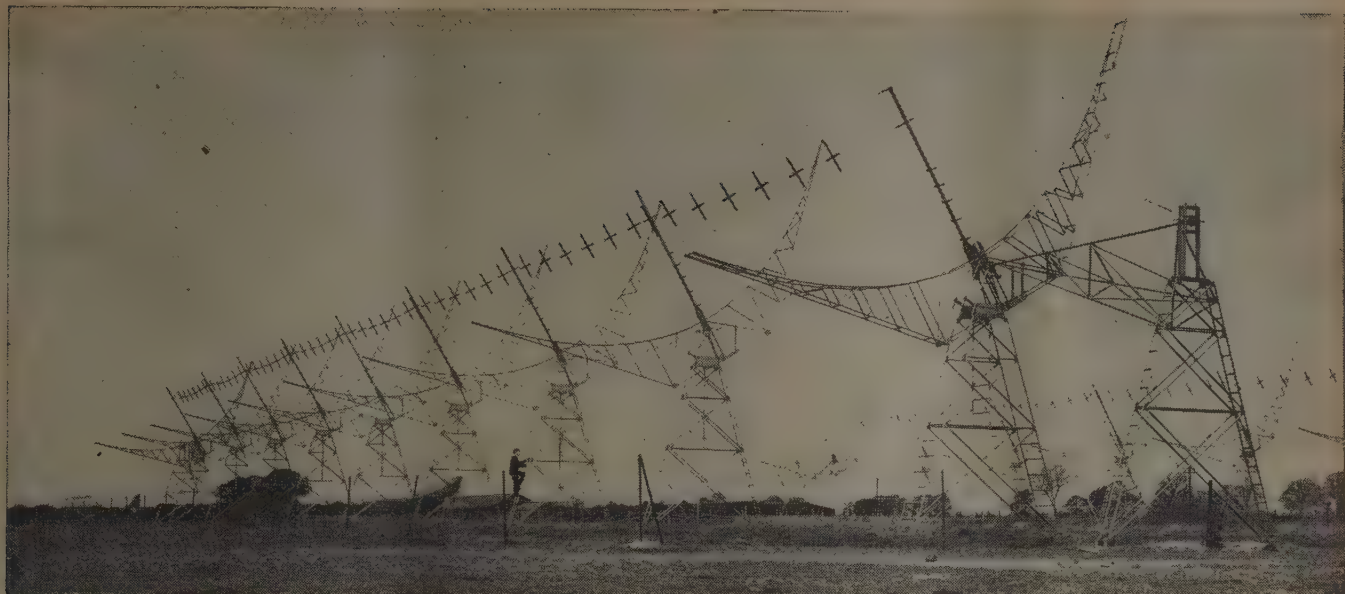
'At the Geffrye, too, they are deeply concerned with social life today—in a practical way. There is a wing with space for temporary exhibitions and a hall for lectures. There is also a children's wing, which boys and girls use more or less as a club, in a district where recreational opportunities are few. They come thronging in with their sketch books, to draw and chatter to each other and ask questions of the museum staff, with none of the restraint which many of us feel in the solemn hush of more pretentious museums. Certainly, the last time I went, the place was crowded with children'.



Children sketching in the Elizabethan room at the Geffrye Museum, Shoreditch

Henry Grant





The Cambridge radio telescope: three of the four aerials which are used together for the detection and location of radio stars

## Science and the Nation

# Science for its Own Sake

The third of six Reith Lectures by SIR EDWARD APPLETON

**T**HIS lecture is going to be about the intellectual interest of science. I am fully aware that the popular support for science nowadays is largely due to the way science is useful to us—to the way it serves our needs and wants for creature comforts, and gives us power to regulate nature for our own ends. I think the basis of this popular attitude is understandable. For most people personal contact with science is by way of its material results, with television, nylon, processed foods, and so on; newspapers and journals have also made us aware of the practical outcome of research on nuclear energy, radar, and rockets.

Yet I have already indicated that people conduct scientific enquiries with different objectives in mind and that there is one sector of science where its ultimate social value is disregarded, at any rate during its pursuit. It is this field of pure science that I want to consider in this lecture. It is a human activity which must be considered as entirely justified by the knowledge it yields and as satisfying an intellectual need rather than a material one. I choose to interpret the word knowledge to mean not merely an appreciation of, say, the facts of nature but also an understanding of the way these facts are related. If we do this we can at once say that the objective of the pure scientist is that of finding out what nature is like and of acquiring insight into why nature is like what it is. Here, then, we may take it that the desire to know does not need any greater justification than the pleasure—the inward excitement—which attends its satisfaction. This means that pure science is a further example of the basic truth that man does not live by bread alone.

I must pause here to mention that the motive of the pure scientist is the conviction that knowledge is its own reward. But experience has often shown his work to be of surprising utility. History teaches us that many of the outstanding achievements of our modern civilisation can be traced back, through technology, to basic scientific discoveries which at first gave no hint of their practical import. However, in this lecture we are going to disregard utility—even ultimate utility—and count knowledge its own end. The consideration of this theme will take us into fields where the aims appear remote from those of technology.

In my first lecture\*, I referred to the foundation of the Royal Society in the seventeenth century as a landmark in the history of science, not only in Britain but throughout the world. Although the original members

of the Society did not spurn the practical applications of science, it seems clear that their first interest was to seek a knowledge and understanding of nature. In the second Charter of the Society we find its objects stated as being the promotion, by the authority of experiments, of 'the Sciences of natural things and of the useful arts, to the glory of God the Creator and the advantage of the human race'. Throughout its long history its own publications show that the Society has been most concerned with the 'Sciences of natural things'—that is, with what I have called science for its own sake.

Three hundred years ago the pursuit of science or natural philosophy was a matter for the amateur. And it is a fact that most sciences have profited substantially from the work of amateurs—and my subject of radio is, notably, one of them. But the great bulk of recent scientific progress in Britain has been due to people who were either directly paid to do research or were given time and facilities to do it as part of an employment with allied duties. In Britain today, for example, what the Royal Society Charter calls 'the science of natural things' is largely the province of our university science departments. We have no large foundations, as America has, financially responsible for institutions which pursue science for its own sake. It is true that we have certain foundations, and even some enlightened industrial firms, which encourage research of this kind, but their support is usually expressed by way of grants to university scientists.

I want you to note two things about university scientific research. The first is the freedom enjoyed by the university scientist in choosing a subject for investigation. As a university scientist myself I must confess that I was able to nibble at three or four research problems in physics before I settled down to work on the radio exploration of the atmosphere, a subject which has been my interest ever since. By contrast with this freedom of choice enjoyed by the pure scientist, the applied scientist, say, in industry, cannot move so readily to something else if a particular problem looks like being insoluble. He has to persevere. That is why I feel his work is more difficult.

But a particular university research department usually concentrates on just one or two lines of research, even within a given subject like physics, chemistry, or geology. Its members acquire a facility with certain techniques and the special apparatus for work in its selected fields becomes more generally available. When I was at the Cavendish



Laboratory, Cambridge, in the nineteen-twenties, the main interest of the research student there, under the direction of Rutherford, was nuclear physics, a subject which he himself had founded. I know he wanted me to work in this field, too, and yet I wanted to work on radio science, for which there was not suitable apparatus at that time. I can remember, to this day, his listening to the plans I had in mind and how, at the end, he said 'Go ahead. I'll back you'. And this he did. This was a most generous thing for him to do; with money limited, it meant diverting funds to radio which might otherwise have supported experiments on the many nuclear problems he was anxious to see attacked.

### A Nursery for Research Workers

So much, then, for the freedom of the university scientist in his choice of subject for research. I must also point out that a research unit in a university is as much a nursery for young research workers as an implement of scientific enquiry. Things happen like this. The professor or senior worker usually has more ideas about problems for research than he can undertake himself. Moreover, the young graduate recruit to research is usually insufficiently informed about the frontier of knowledge to be aware of the places where a 'break-through' may be possible. It is, therefore, usual for a professor who is lucky enough to have found a fertile branch of science to see progress made largely by way of his research students. But there is something more to be said. I believe the actual association of young and older people brings about its own contribution to scientific advancement. As a research supervisor myself, I hope it can be claimed that the influence of the professor on his research students is a beneficial one. What I can claim as certain is that the influence of these young, eager, questing minds is both animating and stimulating for the professor.

Yet there remains the question of financial support for research of this kind. Treasury funds reach our universities in Britain by way of the University Grants Committee, a body whose financial control is exercised with great restraint and whose operations are the wonder of other lands. But there is not a uniform incidence of good research workers in our universities and there is far from a uniform cost in different problems of research. In addition to normal university funds there must therefore be support on a personal, an individual, basis. This can be done only by a body—a national central organisation—that can call on the highest scientific opinion in an advisory capacity and support combinations of good people with good ideas. We cannot plan discovery; but we can plan the conditions in which discoveries can be made. But, even then, there is something of a gamble involved. We must cast our bread upon the waters and be prepared to wait many days.

In scientific work of the kind I am discussing our task is usually that of asking nature the right question. And, often, formulating the question can be more difficult than asking it. Much has rightly been said about the stimulating effect of being obliged to use the simplest method with the simplest of apparatus. There is the famous remark of Rutherford's, 'We've got no money so we've got to think'. But, while economy of means is a good discipline in science, it can, on occasion, operate so as to reduce productivity. I do not myself approve of a research worker having to spend his time making a scientific instrument for his work when he can buy it, so to speak, off the shelf. And there is some scientific apparatus, like the giant telescope for Manchester University, which cannot be made in a university workshop and requires all the resources of skilled industry to construct it.

### The Hands of Technicians

But, for research of this kind to be most fruitful, the scientist needs not only the availability of equipment but also the assistance of skilled hands—the hands of technicians. In industrial research it is usual for the scientist or technologist to have three or four technicians to help him; and in government research departments the staffing arrangements are somewhat similar; there are two or three assistants for each scientist. In university laboratories, by contrast, the ratio of technicians to research workers is entirely different: only about one technician to two or three research workers. We can understand why this ratio in universities tends to be low if we remember what I said earlier about a university research group being a nursery as well as an agency of discovery. It is most desirable that young research workers in training should learn the manual crafts of experimenting and apply them in building their own equipment, even if this tends to slow down the pace of their research, judged from the outcome of new knowledge. They must get the feel, so to speak, of tools and techniques, so as to appreciate their

potentialities and limitations. But it seems to me that universities have here gone too far in acknowledging their responsibility for the training of the young. The research productivity of their senior, established, workers could be greatly increased by further technical help. But to imitate industry would be wrong; an increase of 50 per cent. in the number of university technicians would be a realistic figure.

While a number of great scientists have undoubtedly been outstanding manual craftsmen, I often think that the value of pure technical skill in experimental research is greatly overrated, at any rate so far as the controlling experimenter is concerned. I know no one who had greater experimental sense than my old professor, Sir J. J. Thomson, at Cambridge. And yet he was hopeless with his hands. But his famous assistant, Everett, could carry out all the experiments which 'J.J.' first performed, as it were, in his head. Between them they made a most effective combination. It was by that famous partnership that the subject of electronics was founded. In my own case, I think I can claim that, by taking lessons from Everett, I became a little more proficient in soldering and glass-blowing than my professor; but always it has been my experience that my assistants could beat me easily at both.

However, the progress of pure science does not all depend on the efforts of the experimenter. Many workers use mathematical methods—pencil and paper—to investigate scientific problems. We must also acknowledge the advances made by the comprehending mind—the mind which appreciates the unity among the odd disjointed bits of the evidence. Scientists themselves especially appreciate the aesthetic appeal of the unifying theory, such an appeal being a measure of the extent to which it has replaced discordance by harmony. I digress here for a moment to mention that, although a great deal is known nowadays about experimental nuclear physics, there is still no completely adequate theory of the nucleus itself. The subject awaits the advent of a genius, who will most probably be young.

### Saying the 'First Word'

Let me tell you a story: again it is about my old professor, Sir J. J. Thomson. At a meeting in Trinity College, Cambridge, at which Fellows were being elected, Sir J. J. Thomson, who was then Master, was in the chair. One of the College Fellows, pressing the claims of a particular candidate, concluded his commendation by saying 'Master, I think I can best indicate the standard of this man's work by saying that, when he has written on a subject, the last word has been said'. To which the Master replied 'That may well be, but perhaps we are looking for the young man who says the first word'. Yes, that is the situation; the university scientist, with his freedom of choice of subject, can continue to say the 'first word' on many things.

In order to illustrate the kind of scientific investigation in course of progress in our universities, I have selected a single example for rather detailed comment, instead of a number for brief mention. It relates to one of the most fundamental enquiries ever to engage human attention, namely that of trying to read the history of the universe. Assuredly this must be a case of science for its own sake, for it is concerned with what men think about their environment rather than what they can do about it.

Just as the historian is obliged to go back to old records in order to learn about the past, so the scientist must examine the oldest things he can find in trying to unravel the history of the earth and the universe. In the case of the earth he can examine old rocks and fossils; in the case of the external universe he has only, as evidence, the light waves and the radio waves which reach him from the most distant objects in space. It would not be at all misleading to call such radiations fossil light, and fossil radio, for in most cases they originated many millions of years ago, and only in the last 300 years of that period have we developed methods of unravelling their meaning. The older kind of astronomer, with his powerful optical telescopes, has discovered that, as far he can see, the individual stars in space are not distributed uniformly. They are grouped in star colonies—*island colonies*—like our own galaxy, the Milky Way. In whatever direction we look, these stellar colonies can be seen, millions of them, at all distances up to the limit of observation. Another thing astronomers have discovered, this time with their spectroscopes, is that all the island colonies, viewed in any direction, appear to be travelling away from us; and, perhaps most important of all, the further away they are the faster they seem to be retreating.

Today, there are two rival theories advanced to account for these remarkable phenomena. One, called the evolutionary theory, is based on the assumption that, at some point in time long ago—the evidence



suggests 4,000,000,000 years ago—at some point in distant time all these island colonies or galaxies were congregated close together, and, in their separation outwards since that time, the race has been won by the swiftest. You will readily see that one important consequence of this theory is that the average distance between the galaxies in this expanding universe must have been steadily increasing with time; just as a group of steeplechasers, starting off in a bunch together, get more and more spaced out according to their speeds during the course of a race. Another essential feature of the evolutionary theory of the universe is that all the galaxies are assumed to be of the same age—that is, as old as creation. The rival theory of the universe assumes that, far from evolving in the way I have indicated, the universe has always looked like what it is now. That is why it is often called the steady-state theory. The expanding character of the universe is accepted as a basic element in the theory and, again, galaxies are pictured as travelling outwards and disappearing from the reach of our view.

But the original and startling suggestion is also made that, owing to the creation of matter in empty space, new galaxies are continually being formed, and these join the outward race with the rest. Moreover, this continuous creation of new galaxies is pictured as taking place at a rate which just keeps the spacing of the galaxies constant. It is as if, in our steeplechase, the spacing between the runners did not increase as the race went on, because new runners, popping up from nowhere, kept joining the race all along the route.

The essential differences between two theories are these. According to the evolutionary theory the galaxies are all of the same age, and, ever since a point in time 4,000,000,000 years ago, they have been getting farther apart from one another. According to the theory of continuous creation, on the other hand, galaxies can be of all ages but their average population in space has always been the same as we see it to be now.

Up to the present, there has been no evidence from the older branch of astronomy, using optical telescopes, to allow us to distinguish between these rival theories, although one or two investigations that might serve to do this have been proposed. So far as optical evidence is concerned it is true that the spacing of the galaxies looks uniform, an essential feature of the steady-state theory though not an essential ingredient of the rival theory. However, in recent years, scientists have started to survey the universe using a radio-telescope instead of an optical telescope. And they have succeeded in detecting some thousands of distant radio sources which are often called radio stars though, in fact, it is most probable that these sources are larger than the ordinary stars

we can see through an optical telescope. And most of them do not seem to be identifiable with visible galaxies. Nevertheless they are members of the population of space, so their distribution, like that of the bright galaxies, can be examined and compared with what our rival theories predict.

The radio-astronomers at Cambridge, using a giant radio-telescope, have examined as many as 2,000 radio stars, measuring the strength of their radiations and also their grouping in different directions. And they make out that the population density of radio stars is not uniform throughout all space. It is uniform near us, but at the furthest reaches it increases with distance. In other words, there are too many faint sources to be explained on a theory of uniformity throughout the universe. The other exciting conclusion is that these very distant radio stars, which are in excess, are most probably situated beyond the range of modern optical telescopes. In other words, it looks as if we can see further by radio than by light.

I am sure that these Cambridge radio-astronomers would be the last to be dogmatic about the significance of their results. Nevertheless their observations, so far, are clearly in favour of the evolutionary theory rather than the steady-state theory. And, to keep you really up to date, I should mention that some radio-astronomers in Australia tell me their results do not tally at all with the Cambridge ones. So we have a situation which frequently arises in science. We want more and more data before we can be quite certain of their meaning. But what does seem certain is that the kind of investigation started at Cambridge may well have a powerful bearing on the important problem of what the universe was like when it was much younger than it is now.

Some of you may feel surprised at the assurance with which a scientist may appear to speak, as I have been doing, about the behaviour of things so distant in time and space. So I want to admit the assumption which the astronomer—and indeed any scientist—makes about the universe he investigates. It is this: that the same physical causes give rise to the same physical results anywhere in the universe, and at any time, past, present, and future. The fuller examination of this basic assumption, and much else besides, belongs to philosophy. The scientist, for his part, makes the assumption I have mentioned as an act of faith; and he feels confirmed in that faith by his increasing ability to build up a consistent and satisfying picture of the universe and its behaviour. Indeed, if difficulties were ever encountered in applying terrestrial laws to non-terrestrial places, the scientist would not be inclined to abandon those laws. No, he would be inclined to conclude that a terrestrial being—that is, himself—was not applying the laws properly.

—Home Service

## Two Poems

### Poem for Jane

So many catalogues have been  
Compiled by poets good and bad  
Of qualities that they would wish  
To see their infant daughters wear;  
Or lacking children they have clad  
Others daughters in the bright  
Imagined garments of the flesh,  
Prayed for jet or golden hair  
Or for the inconspicuous  
Homespun of the character  
That no-one ever whistles after.  
Dear Jane, whatever I may say  
I'm sure approving whistles will  
Send you like an admiral on  
Ships of welcome in a bay  
Of tender waters where the fish  
Will surface longing to be meshed  
Within the treasure of your hair.  
And as for other qualities  
There's only one I really wish  
For you to amply manifest,  
And that's a deep capacity  
For loving; and I long for this  
Not for any lucky one  
Who chances under your love's sun

But because without it you  
Would never know completely joy  
As I know joy through loving you.

VERNON SCANNELL

### She

I think the dead are tender. Shall we kiss?—  
My lady laughs, delighting in what is.  
If she but signs, a bird puts out its tongue.  
She makes space lonely with a lovely song.  
She lilts a low soft language, and I hear  
Down long sea-chambers of the inner ear.

We sing together; we sing mouth to mouth.  
The garden is a river flowing south.  
She cries out loud the soul's own secret joy;  
She dances, and the ground bears her away.  
She knows the speech of light, and makes it plain  
A lively thing can come to life again.

I feel her presence in the common day,  
In that slow dark that widens every eye.  
She moves as water moves, and comes to me,  
Stayed by what was, and pulled by what would be.

THEODORE ROETHKE



# Earth Satellites and the Astronomer

By MICHAEL OVENDEN

**T**O the astronomer, the Earth seems little more than a speck of dust—a medium-sized planet of an average star among the 10,000,000,000 stars of our galaxy, a galaxy that is but one among hundreds of millions of similar systems. Yet from this speck of dust the astronomer, with his instruments and in his imagination, probes the universe to countless billions of miles in space, and thousands of millions of years in time. His data are provided by the light—the radiations—that he receives from the outside universe, and records with telescopes, photographic plates, and photoelectric cells.

Stars, nebulae, and galaxies may well give out radiations of all types. The so-called electromagnetic radiations stretch from the short-wavelength gamma and X-rays, through ultra-violet light, visible light, infrared, and heat rays, to long-wave-length radio waves. But, of all the radiations that could give us information about the universe, only a small fraction ever reaches our telescopes. Most of them are completely absorbed by the Earth's atmosphere. Those that do get through are confined to a narrow band of the spectrum containing visible and near-visible light, and to a rather wider band of radio waves. Even worse, those that do get in do not have a clear passage through the atmosphere. Turbulence of the air causes images in a telescope to dart about in the field of view, so that a photograph through a telescope is always a little blurred. The air also scatters sunlight and starlight, so that on even the darkest night the sky is still rather bright. This means that we cannot give long exposures on faint objects, because our photographic plates become fogged by night-sky light. Truly, to the astronomer, looking through the Earth's atmosphere is like looking through a pane of dirty, frosted glass: and it is tantalising to think that light that may have taken 1,000,000,000 years to reach us is distorted almost beyond recognition by the Earth's atmosphere in the last few thousandths of a second of its long journey.

The Earth also receives particles from space, but these do not fare much better than the radiations. In the solar system, there are multitudes of small particles, some of which the Earth sweeps up in its motion round the Sun. The vast majority of these small particles are heated by their passage through the Earth's atmosphere, and are burnt up at a height of about seventy miles. As they burn up, they appear as 'shooting stars'. The average visible shooting star is caused by a particle about the size of a small pea. Larger meteors may survive the atmosphere, to fall to the ground as meteorites—the only parts of the outside universe that we can analyse in the chemical laboratory. When there are spots on the Sun, we believe it may emit streams of charged particles which, if they hit the Earth, cause the aurora, or polar light. But we cannot observe these streams directly. Numbers of atomic nuclei, moving at high speeds, also impinge upon the Earth the so-called cosmic rays. Again, we cannot observe the primary cosmic rays at the Earth's surface, but only secondary particles produced by interaction with the atmosphere.

For historical reasons, cosmic rays are usually considered to fall within the scope of physics rather than astronomy. Cosmic-ray physicists have made extensive use of instruments flown in balloons to high altitudes. Attempts have been made to use balloons in astronomy, too,

but this is a much more difficult task. The latest developments have been in the field of high-altitude observations from rockets. Already the spectrum of the sun in the X-ray and far ultra-violet regions has been observed. This rocket research programme will culminate shortly in the launching of a number of artificial satellites.

To many people, who think of astronomy in terms of large telescopes, it seems impossible that small satellites, only a few feet in diameter, could possibly make any important contribution to the subject. Yet the need for building large telescopes has, in part, arisen just because of the

effects of the Earth's atmosphere. The 200-inch telescope at Mount Palomar can photograph galaxies to distances of about 2,000,000,000 light-years. We know nothing about more distant systems. Yet a simple instrument, consisting of a small lens, a few colour filters, a photoelectric cell, and an electronic circuit no bigger than a quarter-pound packet of tea, can tell us about the far depths of space. Because, although such a simple instrument could not observe individual galaxies, it could measure the total brightness of the distant galaxies added together. If the universe were of infinite age, and the galaxies all of similar appearance and uniformly distributed through space, then the night sky would be as bright as the surface of the Sun, and we would not be here to see it. Clearly, the universe is not like this. From a measurement of the background radiation resulting from all the distant galaxies added together, we could learn much about the number of galaxies beyond the present limits of our telescopes. The difficulty has been that we cannot make such an observation from the Earth's surface, because the faint light from the distant galaxies is swamped by the night-sky light produced by the Earth's atmosphere.

Small artificial satellites will be able to give us important information about the numbers of meteors of various

sizes. With the naked eye, we can see 'shooting stars' caused by meteors above about a millimetre in diameter. Some 75,000,000 of such meteors enter the Earth's atmosphere every day. With radar, we can observe smaller meteors, down to a few tenths of a millimetre in diameter. All these observations lead us to a law of meteor distribution. It is a simple law. It says that small meteors contribute just as much matter to the total meteor population as do large meteors, their smaller mass being just compensated by their larger numbers. Using this law, we can estimate the number of meteors smaller than those that we can detect directly. According to these figures, a small satellite, with a hull about a hundredth of an inch thick and a diameter of about a yard, should be punctured by a small meteor once every few months.

But we have other ways by which we can estimate the number of small meteors. For example, the zodiacal light, which can be seen just after sunset of a spring evening stretching away from the Sun in the west, is due to the scattering of sunlight by small interplanetary particles. Yet the brightness of the zodiacal light suggests that these small particles are 10,000 times more numerous than would be expected from our distribution law for larger meteors. The zodiacal light particles are probably about a hundredth of a millimetre in diameter. Somewhere between the meteor sizes observed by radar and the zodiacal



Full-sized model, constructed in the United States (of plastic, to show the instruments it contains) of one of the artificial Earth satellites to be launched in 1957



light particles the law of distribution must change. When we know just how often the hull of a small artificial satellite is punctured, we shall be able to calculate the numbers of particles of these intermediate sizes. Since recovery of these first satellites will not be possible, details of the observations of sky brightness and puncturing will be radioed back to Earth automatically, a technique familiar in rocket observations.

Surprisingly enough, small satellites without any instruments at all should tell us something about our own planet, the Earth. Distances over the Earth's surface are found by the usual triangulation methods. But such methods cannot be used so easily to bridge oceans. It is believed that the present system of latitudes and longitudes used in Europe may be as much as 100 yards out compared with the American system. Observations of the difference in position in the sky of a satellite at a known height, when observed from America and Europe, can provide a direct estimate of the distance apart of two points, one on each side of the Atlantic. Usually this method of parallax is used to determine the heights of objects (such as meteor trails) by assuming the size of the earth. The importance of an artificial satellite is this: from its rate of movement across the sky, it will be possible to tell its distance from the Earth's surface without having to know the size of the Earth. Also, from the way in which the motion of such a small satellite differs from that expected for a satellite of a spherical planet, it will be possible to estimate how the mass of the Earth's crust is distributed over different areas of the surface. This would be a great advance on the laborious and uncertain method of measuring the local force of gravity at many places by pendulum observations.

The satellites at present planned will move, to begin with, in orbits at altitudes greater than 200 miles. This is still close enough to the Earth's surface for them to experience some resistance to their motion by the residual atmosphere at these heights. This resistance

will have the effect of gradually bringing the satellites closer to the Earth, and when they reach the lower levels of the atmosphere they will burn up like meteors. It is difficult to estimate how long a lifetime a satellite starting off at a given height will have. This depends upon the amount of atmosphere at great heights. We do not know just how much there is: indeed, this is one of the most important pieces of information that these first satellites will give us. But a satellite above 400 miles should have a lifetime of several years, and its orbit should be determined almost entirely by the force of gravity of the Earth. According to the general theory of relativity, orbits in a gravitational field should differ slightly from those predicted by Newton's theory. Observations of the orbit of the planet Mercury (and of the Earth) about the Sun seem to confirm the predictions of general relativity, but the observations are delicate and the confirmation perhaps not as certain as we would like. An artificial satellite moving in an orbit some 400 miles above the Earth's surface could provide a more crucial test of this important theory.

These are only a few of the possibilities of fundamental research held out by small artificial satellites, with little or no instrumentation. With slightly more complicated instruments, these same satellites could observe the complete spectrum of the Sun, detect charged particles emitted by the Sun, and examine the nature of the primary cosmic rays. Small as they are, they will be very costly, and the development of more elaborate satellites may take a long time. What is possible with the first satellites will depend upon the orbits that they attain. Present plans suggest that the margin between the requirements of a minimum satellite and present practical possibility is not great. But the potentialities of even these simple first attempts leave little doubt that, in the years to come, astronomy will depend more and more upon observations made from outside the atmosphere of the Earth.

—Home Service

## Man as a Whole

JOHN U. NEF on an American university's experiment in criticism and reform

**I**N the United States, almost every firm has 'public relations men', whose business is to make their employers appear in what is called 'a favourable light'. What does this mean? Simply that the current notion of what is big and successful is necessarily significant and desirable.

This idea of the big and the successful is not a new feature of American life—it has always been there. But it was particularly noticeable after the war of 1914. Ever since the last war, and the money lent or given for the economic development of other parts of the world—Europe in particular—the United States is everywhere considered the nation of mass production, of picture magazines, of gadgets; a country without style or shape in any cultural sense.

These are the features of American life that you know about here in Britain. They are the ones you deplore, even if you are sometimes inclined to imitate them. What you may not realise is that from the United States itself has come the most serious criticism of the vulgarity, the superficiality, the lack of style and order which are such obvious features of American life. You will find these criticisms not only in the books of famous expatriates—Henry James, Henry Adams, and Edith Wharton—but also in the books of writers who never left America at all, like Ed Howe and Mary Wilkins Freeman, and of Mark Twain who never lived abroad. These persons have appeared as individuals; they have never been part of a movement; they have never been given a position in the national life comparable to that occupied in the Victorian age by English writers like Meredith and Trollope. This is partly because the life of the mind has never had the place of authority in my country that it has in yours or in Europe. Nevertheless these critical writers have expressed views of the American scene which are also held by many Americans who have no means of making themselves heard in Europe, or, for that matter, at home.

I would like to speak as one of these, and to tell you my own reactions to those things in American life which seem to distort and to impoverish it. I remember the shock my late wife and I had thirty years ago when we returned to the United States after five years of living, studying, and writing in Europe, two years of which were spent in London. At home we were confronted with the manifestations of industrialism—mechanised activities, hurried meals, scraps of conversations,

huge hotels, enormous restaurants. After the intimate relations with our English and French, our Greek and Austrian friends, it seemed as if almost all the humanity had been withdrawn from life.

Returning from our European experiences, we were more and more disturbed to find that everywhere people measured things in terms of statistics. 'X is a \$10,000-a-year man', we were told—not what X thought or what kind of character he was. Another thing that struck us was the extreme specialisation which we found in universities. As one of your Ministers of Education said recently, when two students or two professors from different fields meet, almost the only thing they can say to one another and be understood is: 'Let's have a drink'. This way of measuring everything by statistics, this inability to talk except in the hieroglyphics of each speciality, made creative conversation impossible. Creative conversation is founded on qualitative considerations, on speculations that have to do with those intimate experiences of life which we all share—and on the ageless view of man and his destiny. Special knowledge should be used in creative conversations not for itself, not because it is special knowledge, but as a means of searching human experience and, if possible, illuminating it.

What troubled us most in those years preceding the great depression of 1929 was the complacency with which everybody took these conditions for granted—the assurance that whatever was happening in the United States must be for the best. 'It is all very well for you to talk about moral values', a man said to me, 'but you can't eat 'em'. His idea was that if you ate—whether with or without taste—moral values would follow the calories. Nearly everyone was a marxist, usually without knowing it, and indeed while denying it. They assumed that economic conditions determined all the rest of man's life, that the spirit was not independent, nor the search for beauty, nor the search for truth.

I am not speaking only of business men. The philosophy department of the University of Chicago had long been composed exclusively of pragmatists. One of them, George Herbert Mead, who was John Dewey's closest friend, was my guardian. You cannot imagine what a contrast there was between this man's wide learning, his rich culture, and his acceptance of the prevalent optimism. Like all the other pragmatists at that time, he took the line that whatever was happening



in business, education, politics, or entertainment would almost inevitably have a good result, morally, spiritually, and aesthetically, as well as materially. I believe that the pragmatists not only lost their own critical faculties but dimmed those of their students and colleagues. Critical faculties, with qualitative distinctions and universal principles, are the basis of a creative cultural life.

### A Cultural Ideal

We felt, though only vaguely, that this situation prevented our country from assuming the role of a great nation to lead and to inspire. What could we do about it? There seemed to be no media through which the problem could even be attacked. My wife took to her pen, and her comments on the crisis of our time are beginning to be recognised in small circles in the United States, in France, and in England. She looked on the world with complete independence, with intense concern, and without too much regard for the material values by which her contemporaries were judging the conditions about them. This is not the same as the superficial and facile criticism of the United States which you read in many books by European travellers and journalists. It is in the best tradition of our race, beginning with the Greeks, to wish to have one's country better than it is: and it is not an exaggeration to say that one can suffer—many of us do—when we see that the United States has not equalled in culture the ideal that she might represent for us. This affects us in our daily life and in our work, as well as in our aspirations.

I kept asking myself: how can we meet the narrowing influence of specialisation? I began as a teacher of economics in a small college. I tried substituting for text books such works as Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, Montesquieu's *Spirit of the Laws*, Rousseau's essay on *Inequality among Men*. May I remind you that this was in 1927, long before there were any great book-classes or general courses in the colleges in the United States.

It had seemed to some of us that our country was called upon to create, or to renew (if you prefer to call it that) a philosophy built about man as a whole; that the deeper meaning of the Christian faith needed to be brought into relation to the new industrialised world, that moral philosophy and art should, with religion, resume the central place in the life of our times. These great subjects, central to all our hopes, have been increasingly forsaken for minute specialities and for the natural sciences. We have experts in every field except the supremely important one which encompasses all the others. Is this not after all the knowledge of man? Many of the great scientists are now the first to emphasise that their work tells us nothing really helpful about these strange, mysterious creatures that we are. It does not help us to recognise the beautiful, the good, to know truth (save about the material universe and mathematics), if it tells us nothing about God.

I wrote a book giving expression to these views. Ironically, it was published at the very period that the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbour. I cannot say it was widely read. One trouble was that it was not possible to classify. Since I was an economic historian, it had to be either economic history or nothing; and since it was obviously not really economic history, obviously it must be nothing.

### Independent Enterprise in Graduate Study

At this same time, some of us in the University of Chicago were trying to establish an independent enterprise in graduate study, which would cut across departmental lines, and would be devoted to those very problems which were either ignored altogether or left to the charlatans. We had a great deal of trouble in starting this enterprise because it did not fit in anywhere. Despite the fact that the President of the University and the Dean of the Social Sciences were members of the group, we still had trouble. We were as hard to classify as the book I had written. We called ourselves tentatively the Committee on Civilisation. When the Dean was commissioned by the President to get us set up as modestly as possible, so as not to alarm the faculty, it was decided to put us under the general rubric of the Division of the Social Sciences, because the Dean of that division was one of the four founding members of the committee. The only logical reason for putting us there was that two others among us as well as the Dean were professors in that division. Actually, that is not where we belonged. The one thing we were all agreed on was that the 'scientism' of the social sciences as Frederick Hayek calls it, or 'metascience' as Russell Davenport calls it, has been found inadequate for dealing with those needs and purposes of human beings which it is our aim to express and to clarify.

When the negotiations were under way for setting us up, the Dean rang me on the telephone. 'I can never get us set up under the title the Committee on Civilisation', he explained in distress. 'What title would you suggest?' I asked. 'The Committee on Social Thought', he replied. 'What does that mean?' I asked. 'I don't know', he said, 'but I think it might get us through the executive committee, because nowhere in the university is there any study of social thought'. I have always taken the view, perhaps wrongly, that it is better to be than not to be. So I gave the name my blessing, and that is what we have been called ever since.

From the administrative standpoint, we are a small faculty of nine, with a tiny number of graduate students (between twenty and twenty-five of them) and with immense independence both as to subjects, lectures, methods of study and research. Since it is not possible to find an equivalent for us in any other university, either in America or in Europe, we cannot be classified. So we are something of an embarrassment to orthodox university administration. What has saved us administratively, so far, has been the distinguished men on our faculty and those who have come to us as visitors.

We train each of our students—graduates from many fields of study—in what we call the fundamentals. This is a grounding in the basic principles of philosophy and theology, in great works of literature and history. We hope that this training will lead them—and to a considerable degree it has already led some of them—to relate their special studies to man as a whole. If it does, then it will transcend the work of even the most advanced centres of graduate research.

### Committed to the Search for Truth

It is difficult for me to find a comparison for you. Superficially, we resemble two great institutes which already exist. One is very old: the Collège de France, which goes back more than 400 years to the reign of François I. The other is very young: the Institute of Advanced Study in Princeton. We grant members of the faculty similar freedom to do what each one pleases. We relieve them from almost all the burdens of ordinary teaching. But, beyond these resemblances, there are differences which are even more important. In these other institutes, each professor, in his capacity as professor, has only his own specialised public. There is no common philosophical belief that holds the faculty together, no particular goal which unites the members in a common purpose. With us, although the faculty are far from being united in religious practice or even in religious faith, we are distinguished from almost every department of every university in your country as well as in mine in one respect which is of importance. We are committed to the search for truth. I do not mean in the specific sense in which the natural scientist or social scientist is committed. The truth I am talking about is one which aims to comprehend every facet of man's existence.

So our goal, unlike the goals of other faculty members and of other sections of universities, of even most of our modern writers, is to reach not a specialised public of experts but the average intelligent layman. We have no desire to introduce another specialisation, nor even to be specialists in the general, as Auguste Comte tried to be. We want to reach at the cultural and spiritual poverty that is deforming our civilisation.

I must not give the impression that the Committee on Social Thought comprises the only Americans who have these aims. That would be presumptuous and untrue. I have just read the posthumous book of Russell Davenport, distinguished editor of *Fortune*, entitled *The Dignity of Man*. I find that he has said these things better than I said them fifteen years ago, and it is clear that he had never read a line of my *The United States and Civilisation*. I have discovered further that the Myrin Institute in Garden City, New York, is in many ways dedicated to the same purposes as our Committee on Social Thought. No doubt there are many other Americans who share our sense of the great need for giving this work of criticism and reform a central place in the life of our country; and for giving expression to the spiritual ideals on which the United States was founded. The United States was founded on the basis of European experience, and by men who thought it worth while to write these values into our Constitution. For us, today, these values must be restated in a way which will free the imagination of all men in all countries.

What this small but growing group of Americans has to offer is not the private possession of the United States; it is the public property of the human race. Industrial man is not a god: indeed, his trouble is, as Davenport says rightly in his book, that he is not even a man. It is our task to find man again. Anything less than that will not be enough.

—Third Programme



# Bringing up Junior

JAMES L. HENDERSON on the young people of America

**T**HERE is one feature of the recent presidential election in the United States all too easy to overlook but foolish to ignore. About 5,000,000 citizens voted for the first time. The next election may find an even larger number voting for the first time: this coming generation of Democrats and Republicans are 'Juniors' now.

What kind of children are they? It is easy enough to spot the outward difference between them and their opposite numbers over here; in appearance, in habit, and in taste. Everyone is well aware of these

divergences, and the tendency is to conclude that such outward contrasts constitute the main, or even the sole, difference between the Americans and ourselves. This would be a most misleading oversimplification, and it might account for the mixture of awe and condescension which all too often colours our attitude to these powerful transatlantic cousins of ours. What we have to ask is this: are these obvious contrasts just superficial, or do they express fundamental differences in the pattern of growing up? My own investigation into this, although brief, had at least the advantage of being based on laboratory conditions, so to speak. It was in fact my job to discuss with American teachers and parents the upbringing of children at home and at school, in America and elsewhere, in the past and the present,

in theory and practice. As we talked together, comparing and contrasting the different styles of upbringing, one impression began to dominate my mind: what American boys and girls are growing up to believe about life in general and democracy in particular is going to affect enormously the way in which the world is governed by 1984.

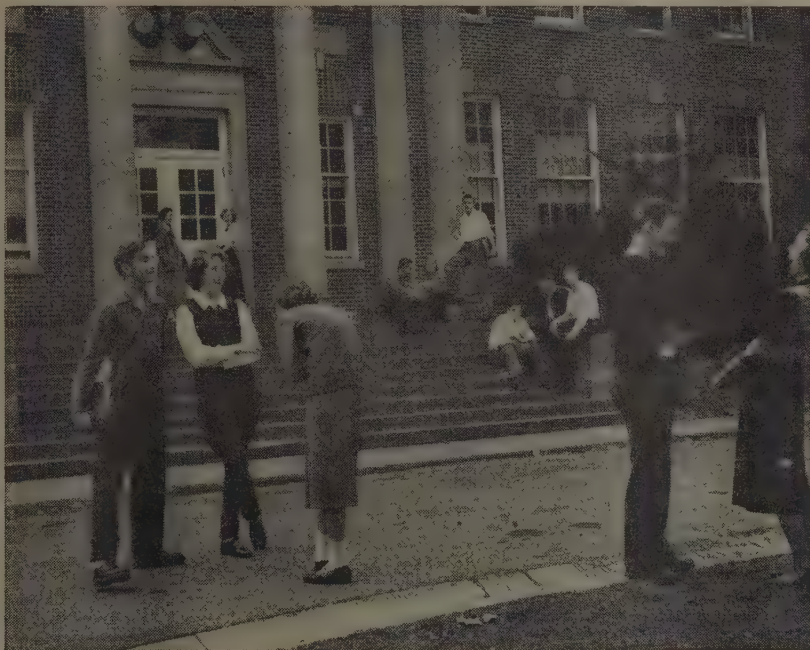
Although the term 'Junior' tends to be used mainly for the young male infant, I shall use it here in a wider sense to cover both sexes and including teenagers: his habitat is both urban and rural, and in spite of the synthetic uniformity of drinks and drugstores which lap him round, he is not an abstract conception but several million unique individuals. That being said, we can perhaps afford to generalise about him. But before looking beneath the surface, we should perhaps recall the general pattern.

Like all other children, Junior starts by being just an extension of his parents and is nurtured in their hopes, fears, and beliefs. Above all he drinks in—almost with Mom's milk or its canned substitute—their largely uncritical worship of 'the American Way of Life'. Like all other children he begins sooner or later to challenge parental authority. So far the pattern is the universal one. But, unlike the majority of children in the Old World, Junior is not really a rebel. He seldom challenges his parents' basic assumptions but only what appears to him to be their unnecessary delay in admitting him to their adult privileges. For example, Junior demands early occupation of the driver's seat in Pop's new automobile but takes it for granted that the vehicle is heading in the right direction. Surely this is a contrast with his

British counterpart, whose adolescence is much more of a revolt against basic parental convictions?

Junior as observed appears to know all about children's rights and to insist on them, even to exploit them in and out of season. When very young his howls for 'candy' are loud, persistent, and usually effective. He seems to know that in almost every situation of daily life public opinion will back him in his demand for a fairly centre-stage position. He shows this in his easy, rather off-hand, but immensely friendly attitude towards grown-ups: he has little doubt that they will

take him seriously. Miss Junior has been written and spoken about so often that I need only remind you briefly of her; she has an early outward sophistication—a ten-year-old sitting next to me in a Bible-belt church had lipstick and nail-polish. By thirteen or fourteen she will often be 'dating', and much rather helpful and delightful chit-chat goes on, openly though a little confusedly, as to the degree of intimacy that 'dating' should permit. Master Junior, however, impresses by his extreme and rather prolonged boyishness: the masculine American behaviour pattern at eighteen or nineteen seems to be more akin to the British sixteen-year-old, even though the British sixteen-year-old has generally led a more sheltered life. Behind both sexes there lurks the enigmatic figure of Mom, that



Pupils of an American High School

doyenne of the psychiatrist's case-study! I was struck again and again by the difference between the American mother's relationship to her family and that of her European counterpart: she seems to present to husband and children a hard front with a soft centre: she is the 'little woman' and the 'terrible matriarch' simultaneously, a mixture which rather readily leads Pop and the juveniles to gang up against her.

Intellectually, as distinct from comparisons in emotional development, Junior has a rather wider, and at the same time more shallow, knowledge than his British contemporary: this would seem to be true all the way up from infant class to university level. Keyserling remarked that 'an American university is an athletic association in which certain opportunities for study are provided for the feeble-bodied'. That observation is scarcely more than a joke: it indicates a weakness without describing the reality. But—and this is something we in Britain really do have cause to envy—Junior is altogether free from any kind of anti-manual, anti-mechanical snobbery. In Britain it is becoming more and more common for students to earn money while studying, but in the United States this happens in a far bigger way. The High School teacher feels quite easy about earning some extra dollars by driving the bus which collects and brings the children to and from school.

It is all too easy in this somewhat over-child-centred age to forget the bringers-up, whether parents or teachers, and here there appears to be a paradox. On the one hand there is the tendency to fuss and bother much less than we do about Junior's upbringing, leaving him to find things out for himself and just attending when necessary to the satis-



faction of his physical needs—a kind of legacy of the frontier toughness projected on to modern youth. On the other hand, there is certainly a growing concern among the younger generation of parents—more than on this side of the Atlantic—to make use of the discoveries of child-psychology in the nursery and the classroom. Although the application is sometimes crude or ill-advised, this is not just something for smart wisecrack, as I learnt when asked to address a young mothers' club in a small town out in the Middle-West. Most of these young mothers had got well beyond the stage of rushing at Junior with diaper in one hand and psychological textbook in the other. They were beginning to understand the importance of providing a climate of 'permissiveness' for Junior; something which strikes a balance between bringing him up 'soft' and treating him rough.

How patient they were! In American homes and in many public places I saw examples of the way in which Mom and Pop put up with children's noise and mess stoically, and indeed cheerfully. A particular incident comes vividly to mind: the day coach of a long-distance train, temperature soaring to the nineties and a travel-stained family of ma, pa, two toddlers, and a baby. Hour after hour not only the parents but all the surrounding adults ministered to the children's wants. At times I thought they were being too much indulged and that grown-up tempers would fray under the strain of shrieks and wild acrobatics: only mine did, and when we reached our destination children and adults were remarkably sweet and reasonable, and I could not help wondering whether we, by comparison, have ever really abandoned the maxim of children being seen and not heard. Perhaps this kind of treatment makes Junior more trying in the early years than his British contemporary, and if this parental leniency is not subject to ultimate parental authority, it can perpetuate an unpleasant brashness into later life. Yet I suspect that in many American households Junior is benefiting enormously from his elders' more than nodding acquaintance with the information available in the post-Freudian world.

In Britain one might say we have been in the habit of taking democracy for granted. In America it is much more consciously asserted. Yet both British and American educationists would agree that one important aim in the upbringing of their children is to prepare them for the experiences of democracy through the experiences of democracy at home and in school. What is so fascinating is the contrast in the two ways of setting about this task. For various reasons, most of them historical, the Americans lay chief stress on bringing as many young people for as long as possible up to a minimum standard of education, thereby tending to sacrifice some degree of scholastic quality: we rely more on a selective process operating at an earlier stage and the nursing of an *élite* partly academic, and partly social, by which I mean plain 'class'. I constantly had the impression, while lecturing to American students on the English educational system, that regarded as a preparation for democracy they considered our arrangements, and especially our public schools, as plumb crazy, wicked, and wrong. The

crux of the matter is which system, the American one of delaying academic selection as long as possible or the British one of making it early, is best calculated to produce the kind of citizens which a society requires. One objective should surely be the same in both cases: to produce leaders who can act with an authority that springs from understanding and respect for those they lead.

In the U.S.A. the teacher is 'hired' by the local school board, in Britain he is employed. The difference in verb indicates an important divergence of concept: the American teacher is definitely there to carry out the wishes of a society, which at any rate over vast areas is uniform in the educational demands it makes. He is hired for that purpose, and the local community looks upon it as its right and duty to see that the labourer complies with the terms of his hire rather precisely. In other words, he has little chance and not much desire to oppose the social pressures which impinge on him. Some of these pressures, as well as being in my view contradictory, are revealing. The English mind is somewhat startled when confronted by a passage such as this from a handbook of regulations and advice for members of a Junior High School staff:

All of us will agree that to get rich safely, honestly and rapidly, and at the same time make a vital contribution to one's community is a laudable ambition for every young American looking forward to a profitable life.

That is really only saying openly what most of us would more furtively hold for true, but the order of the aims is curious to British eyes. It seems to me that the social pressures influencing teacher and taught, although apparently uniform—the American way of life—do in fact contain a contradiction. In all our western society, men's acquisitive and altruistic motives are generally at loggerheads: but my strong impression is that, whereas in Europe these are increasingly regarded as conflicting motives, in the U.S.A. they are fostered equally and simultaneously with especial blatancy so that the incentives of 'profit' and 'service' get muddled: the philosophy of 'get on' or 'get out' clashes with that of good fellowship. Despite the incessant claim to equate 'go-getting' with 'giving', the bringers-up have failed to reconcile these two in themselves and so they bequeath the dilemma to Junior. Can he, in the context of mid-twentieth-century America with her world commitments, 'get rich safely, honestly and rapidly' and at the same time make a vital contribution to his community—a community which now extends far beyond the frontiers of God's own country?

My answer as to Junior's prospects must be tentative. They depend, first, on his being able to reconcile these two ideals of 'service' and 'profit' in a more profound perspective than just good Americanism; and, secondly, on whether he can grow up in time to realise that morning is only a prelude to noontide, that the qualities that made the frontier pioneer can become the defects of the settler, and that not even he, with his vast power and generosity, can 'fix' everything in heaven and earth.—*Home Service*

## Six Virtues for Authors—II

# Holy Nonsense

By PHILIP LEON

WHAT is your favourite literary virtue? What is your favourite novel, poem, picture, play, wine or beer, your favourite anything? The question is always a searching and intimate one: so intimate and searching, in fact, that we feel inclined to say 'Mind your own business!' But if we try to reply in some way other than this dismissive one, the answer turns out to be difficult. At best, and with luck, we may be able to describe our favourite something. But when we start looking for instances we discover that the task set us is not what it first seemed to be.

It is not a matter of picking from the large but finite number of things that are already there. Rather we are driven to make a selection from the infinite number of things that are not there yet. This is not because we are such a rare being and our standards so impossibly high. It is not a question of the rare and the high at all; we have not been asked to say what we think best but what we like best; we have been given *carte blanche* to be ourself. The instance is not there because no one else has had the good or ill fortune to be us. There is also another

reason why it is not there: because *we* are not all there; our favourite self is not there yet. Therefore I shall be better able to describe, or at least to adumbrate, my favourite literary virtue than to exemplify it.

I have called it 'holy nonsense'. By this I mean nonsense about holy things, or the representation of holy things as nonsense. It springs from a reverence for the holy in the writer, but in its expression it is a kind of supernal blasphemy. It is opposed to two things: to ordinary, or nether, blasphemy on the one hand, and solemnity on the other.

Ordinary blasphemy says the holy things are not there at all; it declares the very concept of the holy to be nonsense. Or, rather, it wills that they are not there; it is an unconscious protest against their being there. It is a kind of would-be liberation from the awe of authority; we need be no better than we are, it tells us. At its most intense it is a twisted, searing, and blasting lightning, like that with which Jupiter the Thunderer struck those who denied or offended him. My supernal blasphemy is a blessed and blessing illumination: it shows us that the holy things are there and that they are much holier than



we imagined; but also that they are very different—much less frightening and freezing, much warmer, more domestic. It does not reject the concept of the holy; it enriches us with the intimate, glowing feeling of holiness. It liberates us by conferring upon us the freedom of the Holy of Holies. It is the lightning which unites heaven and earth and does not consume that which stands between them, as nether blasphemy does.

The second opposite to holy nonsense is solemnity. Solemnity petrifies the holy. Or, like the Gorgon's head, it turns the beholder into stone; it stylises all his approach to the holy; it makes it unreal and meaningless. It turns the holy into taboo. Holy nonsense is the rod that strikes living water out of the rock, or the Pygmalion which makes the statue come to life.

### Supernal Blasphemy

The humour of holy nonsense is not what appears on the surface. It seems to make fun of the holy, but its deepest effect upon us is to make us aware how comical are our ideas about the holy. It is a commonplace that to God our subtlest and most complex theologies must appear very childish indeed. Holy nonsense makes us realise that. Nether blasphemy asserts that it is nonsense to talk about God and the holy—to say that they exist. Supernal blasphemy shows us that the way we talk, what we say, about them is nonsense. Solemnity tends to identify 'holy talk' with holy things; supernal blasphemy releases us from the bonds of this deadening identification.

Holy nonsense is a religious quality, and so there has always been a special place for it in all living religion. I shall take two illustrations from literature. My first is the comedy of Aristophanes, 'The Frogs'. Greek comedy was, like tragedy, part of the Greek religion, and comic, like tragic, plays were performed on the festivals of the god Bacchus and in his honour. Religion is, or should be, fun: this we hear often enough nowadays. But that the fun should be about the divinity himself; that he himself should be turned into a figure of fun—this is something that strikes strangely upon the modern ear. But that is precisely what happens in Aristophanes' play. Bacchus there figures as a buffoon and poltroon, as an illiterate sot, glutton, and fornicator. And the god himself, represented in the theatre by his statue and his priest, is appealed to with transcendent effrontery to confirm, laud, and reward this true representation of himself. To crown all, the celebration of the Eleusinian mysteries is brought in, and the mysteries occupied the place in Greek religion that in ours is held by the Communion (the Communion, in fact, is historically connected with them).

We can best appreciate what 'The Frogs' does if we compare it with the tragedy of the author's contemporary Euripides, 'The Bacchanals'. Indeed, in Greek the comedy recalls the tragedy by its very title ('The Bacchanals' echoes 'The Bacchanals'). Both plays deal with Bacchus, the god of wine, the wine of the grape and the wine of the spirit, or inspiration. The tragedy celebrates the strange and dread power of the wine of the spirit, the power that overrides and sometimes shatters the safe enclosure which convention and common sense form for our lives. The comedy works out, realistically and grotesquely, what is implied by the idea of the god of drunks and drunkenness; its humour is more than what the surface shows: it is about the peculiar way in which men represent the divine to themselves. But comparing the two plays, it is hard to say which better communicates the wonder of inspiration to us, the tragedy or the comedy. For Aristophanes' blasphemy is like his nonsense lyrics: these often have greater power than the most serious lyrics to make us feel the very pulse of lyricism; his blasphemy makes the divine more present than the most solemn of hymns, and this it does even in the absence of the religious atmosphere and the religious beliefs of the author's times.

### The Mystery Plays and Greek Drama

My second example comes from one of the mystery plays. These corresponded exactly in function to Greek drama: they were part of religion and originally performed in church. The play is the English fifteenth-century so-called 'Second Shepherds' Play' from the Towneley Cycle. In it there is a mock-nativity preceding the nativity of Christ. Mak has stolen a sheep and taken it to his cottage, where his wife, Gyll, swaddles it, places it in a cradle next to her bed, and lies there groaning like a woman after child-birth. The three shepherds come to look for their stolen property and what follows is a parody anticipating in detail, but in its own key, the holy happening which is announced soon after. The effect intended is obviously of the same kind as that aimed at by Aristophanes, though not so evident

because the art is less and the language is stranger, at least for someone to whom fifteenth-century English is more 'Greek' than Greek itself.

In literature, holy nonsense is naturally found only in the ages of faith, and our own age is not one of them. But in all ages it is to be met with in the talk of deeply religious people. I am thinking of jokes about God: about His peculiar un-Aryan taste in people (for example: 'How odd of God To choose the Jews!'); about His Son (in one such joke God consoles the good Jew in Heaven who mourns because his son has turned Christian: 'Never mind', he tells him. 'Boys will be boys: My own Son did the same'); jokes about the Mother of His Son; about the domestic complications of the Holy Triangle, the Trinity. These jokes have either been invented by religious people or adopted by them from nether blasphemy, adopted and redeemed by the deeper meaning they give them.

Take, for instance, Heine's saying on his death-bed: '*Dieu me pardonnera; c'est son métier*', 'God will forgive me; that's his job'. Heine may have meant (though who are we to say so?) simply to sneer away the possibility and necessity of forgiveness, and therefore also the necessity for repentance. But the religious man sees in these words first the profound truth about God's nature: God is forgiveness. And then he laughs at our conception of Him as a functionary—as a police court magistrate who is perhaps inclined to condemn the prisoner but is in a fix because the Clerk to the Justices has informed him that his only business, his sole competence, is to acquit.

Outside religion the counterparts of the holy are the tragic and the sublime; and the parallel to holy nonsense is the literature which makes, or apparently makes, a farce of tragedy, and shows, or seems to show, the sublime as ridiculous.

### Prattling Prelude to Immortal Longings

The writer who comes nearest to achieving the comic treatment of the tragic is Shakespeare. I am not thinking of a scene like that in 'Macbeth': the porter is about to open the gates to the castle in which Duncan has just been murdered, and under the influence of a hangover he soliloquises about candidates for admission to hell; then he goes on to moralise, soberly and ruefully, on the equivocal virtue of drink as an aphrodisiac. Nor am I thinking of the prattling of the clown in 'Antony and Cleopatra', about the no-good 'goodness' of his 'worm', the asp, whose 'biting is immortal', so that 'those that do die of it seldom or never recover'. This prattling preludes the great moment when Cleopatra, about to apply to herself the worm of which the clown has wished her 'all joy', comes out with:

Give me my robe, put on my crown; I have  
Immortal longings in me:

In both these cases, and in many others like them, we have comedy juxtaposed with tragedy; it is a foil to the tragedy; it intensifies its darkness. But in a play like 'Hamlet' the tragedy and comedy are not juxtaposed; they are coextensive, for the Prince of Denmark is both the spirit of tragedy and the supreme court jester, and his theme in both roles is the same: the whole of life, or rather all that is—earth, heaven, and hell. And yet the example is not perfect. For his humour is of a sombre kind; it, too, intensifies the gloom, it does not make us feel that the frowning night and the laughing day are one and the same. The example would have been perfect if Hamlet, besides being himself, had also been a Falstaff; there is nothing sombre about Falstaff.

In the matter of sublimity nothing is higher or rarer than love; but also nothing is commoner or more grotesque, both on its physical and emotional side. Literature has done varied justice to both aspects, the rare and high as well as the common and grotesque; but, in general, separately. Here are some verses which try to unite them. A man and a woman have been seeking separately for the rare magic gold; at last—the man speaks—

Now in the circle of our questing due  
We find: you me, I you.  
Yon public sun and unpeculiar seas  
We find. These tame undragon'd trees  
Are Colchis and the far Hesperides.  
The empyrean great and strange  
Hath humbly stooped to kissing range.  
The things that common thousands do,  
The things that thousands say  
We find both rare and new.  
We kiss and cuddle, love our play,  
And all we find  
Is to our mind.

(continued on page 882)



# NEWS DIARY

November 21-27

## Wednesday, November 21

It is announced that the Prime Minister is to take a few weeks' complete rest on medical advice

Secretary-General of the United Nations reports to General Assembly on Emergency Force and arrangements for clearing Suez Canal

Mr. Moletov is appointed Soviet Minister of State Control

A new general strike is called in Budapest  
Commons begin debate on Government's Rent Bill

## Thursday, November 22

Mr. Butler reports to Commons on situation in Middle East

More offences are to carry death penalty in Cyprus

Post Offices begin distribution of petrol ration books

## Friday, November 23

Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs addresses U.N. General Assembly in defence of British policy

Hungarian Government announces that Mr. Nagy, former Prime Minister, and forty companions have left Budapest for Rumania

Sir Anthony Eden flies to Jamaica for rest cure

## Saturday, November 24

U.N. General Assembly asks Britain, France, and Israel to withdraw their forces from Egypt forthwith

A Swiss message reports that all members of British and French communities in Egypt are being ordered to leave within ten days

Signor Cantelli, the Italian conductor, is among thirty-three killed in air disaster near Paris

## Sunday, November 25

Mr. Kadar, the Hungarian Prime Minister, makes a statement about the intentions of his Government

General Burns, U.N. Emergency Force Commander, meets allied Commander-in-Chief in Port Said

## Monday, November 26

Minister of State for Foreign Affairs announces that Britain will not retaliate against Egypt for her expulsion of British citizens

Miss Rose Heilbron, Q.C., is appointed Recorder of Burnley

## Tuesday, November 27

Government's long-term policy for agriculture is published

Jordan is to end treaty of 1948 with Britain  
Egyptian Foreign Minister addresses U.N. General Assembly on Emergency Force and clearing of Suez Canal

Mau Mau terrorist leader is condemned to death for unlawfully possessing fire-



A Norwegian contingent of the United Nations Emergency Force marching through Port Said (where they are undertaking police duties under the cease-fire agreement) on November 21. On November 25 General Burns, commander of the U.N. force, met the Allied commanders in Port Said and discussed the activities of the Emergency Force



Sir George Barnes saluting Princess Margaret, President of the University College of North Staffordshire, after Her Royal Highness had installed him as Principal of the College at Keele on November 20. Sir George was formerly B.B.C. Director of Television



H.R.H. The stadium in the sixteen



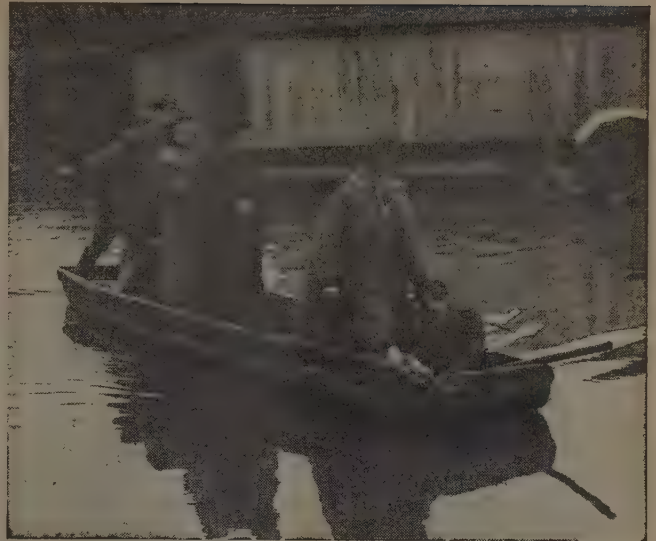
The new research reactor 'Dido', at the Atomic Harwell, which was brought into service on November 20. Effects of high-intensity neutron radiation

Right: Marshal of the R.A.F., Lord Tedder (see plaque in a room used by General Eisenhower 1944-45, he had his headquarters at Bushy Park, classroom in a school for American sen





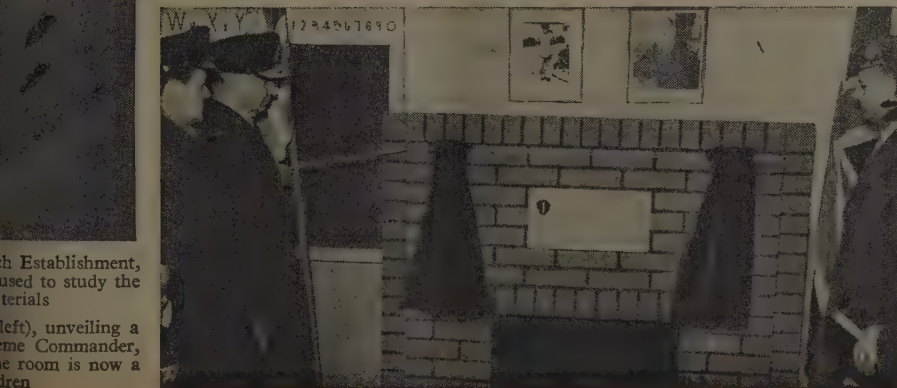
linburgh driving round the Australia, before opening Games on November 22



A group of Hungarian refugees who managed to find a boat in which to cross a canal and reach safety in Austria (most of the bridges have been destroyed by the Russians). On November 22 Dr. Kreisky, acting Foreign Minister of Austria, said that his country could no longer cope unaided with the great number of refugees



Queen Victoria's bedroom at Kensington Palace which is among the state apartments reopened today to the public. It was in this room that news of her accession was brought to the young queen on June 20, 1837. Considerable restoration work has recently been carried out in some of the other rooms and galleries. H.M. the Queen paid a visit to the apartments on November 28



ch Establishment, used to study the materials

(left), unveiling a name Commander, the room is now a children



A model of a 'garden seat' horse bus (1901) in an exhibition, 'Transport Treasures', illustrating public transport and its history now on view at Euston Station



(continued from page 879)

But this, too, is only a near example. We hear the organ blast; but where is the penny whistle? Perhaps in the last three lines.

Why do I like holy nonsense and its secular counterparts best? Because they come nearest to life. Literature, it is sometimes said, is superior to life. It may be. But at the cost of what impoverishment, what thinning! Literature is superior to life only as a *consommé* is superior to a *minestrone*. Life at its most living is a delightful, amusing, intriguing, excruciating, and agonising synthesis of opposites—of weal and woe, of high and low, of light and dark: it is Heracleitus' 'war of opposites' which is 'the father of all things', and also 'the peace that

passeth understanding'. Literature keeps the opposites apart. At the most, and at the best, it allows them to approach each other, to circle round each other, even occasionally to touch finger-tips, as in a stately minuet. But generally it makes them observe a respectful distance. Between the sublime and the ridiculous, for example, there must be at least the proverbial one step. Take that one step and you plunge into bathos. It is this danger that makes the instances of my favourite literary virtue so few. But the danger does not exist in life; bathos is a purely literary peril. You cannot in life take the one step which separates the sublime from the ridiculous; you cannot take it because it does not exist. In life the sublime and the ridiculous are one.

—Home Service

## Gentleman by Act of Parliament

By STANLEY RUBINSTEIN

**G**ENTLEMEN, I appeal to you—really, gentlemen—consider, I beg of you. I am of the law. I am styled "gentleman" by Act of Parliament. I maintain the title by the annual payment of twelve pound sterling for a certificate. I am not one of your players of music, stage actors, writers of books, or painters of pictures, who assume a station that the laws of their country don't recognise. I am none of your strollers or vagabonds. If any man brings his action against me, he must describe me as a gentleman, or his action is null and void. I appeal to you—is this quite respectful? Really, gentlemen . . .

This is what, according to his creator, Charles Dickens, Sampson Brass said. Sampson Brass was an odious person who either could not or would not recognise a snub when it was staring him in the face. Dickens described him in *The Old Curiosity Shop* as 'of Bevis Marks in the City of London, Gentleman, one of her Majesty's attornies of the Courts of King's Bench and Common Pleas at Westminster and a solicitor of the High Court of Chancery'.

### An Act Assumed to Be Non-Existent

For many years solicitors have wondered to which particular Act of Parliament they are entitled for their patent of gentility. Edmund Christian, the solicitors own historian, could do no more than write, in 1896, 'the one thing widely known concerning the solicitor is that he is a gentleman by Act of Parliament', which was a curious slip on his part, and William Andrews, whose book *The Lawyer in History, Literature and Humour* was published in the same year, made no such mistake, quoting correctly from Dickens. He did not, however, attempt to identify the Act, whilst Christian, because, as he says, no one has been able to find it, assumed it to be non-existent.

But the picture has changed overnight, as it were. Mr. Thomas Lund, C.B.E., the learned Secretary of the Law Society, decided to investigate, and he has recently published the result of his researches in the *Law Society's Gazette*. His voyage of discovery makes fascinating reading, and it ultimately led him to an Act passed in 1729 in the reign of George II. The Act does not, however, declare in so many words that a solicitor is a gentleman—nothing so simple; it has to be read in with, and as supplementing, Acts passed in 1402 and 1413—in the reigns of Henry IV and Henry V respectively.

The 1402 Act first made attorneys in the Court of Common Pleas officers of the Court, by directing their names to be placed on the roll, and neither attorneys of other courts nor solicitors were deemed to be privileged as officers. Any solicitor who may be disposed to feel aggrieved will kindly remember that in those days solicitors were regarded as agents merely in the soliciting causes for those who employed them, and had no power to appear formally, as had attorneys, in court to represent clients.

Mr. Lund has quoted from the *Institutes of the Law of England*, wherein Coke, the author, gives an exposition upon the 1413 Statute, and points out that 'every gentleman must be *arma gerens* and the best trial of a gentleman in blood (which is the lowest degree of nobility) is by bearing of arms'; but Coke goes on, referring to the Act, to say that 'a man may have an Addition of Gentleman within this Statute, if he be a gentleman by office (though he be not by birth) as many of the King's Household, and of other Lords be; and Clerks,

being officers in the King's Court of Record; and if they be out of their office, they are but Yeomen; and yet as long as they continue in their office, they ought to be named Gentlemen, as their due addition'; and the Act of 1413 required that the proper additions must be used in suits or actions where process of outlawry lay. Which certainly explains Sampson Brass' insistence that 'if any man brings his action against me, he must describe me as a gentleman, or his action is null and void'.

So to the 1729 Act, under which, as Mr. Lund points out, solicitors were, for the first time, required to be enrolled as officers of the King's Court of Record, just as Attorneys of the Court of Common Pleas had been required to be enrolled in the King's Court of Record under the Act of 1402. So Mr. Lund concludes that solicitors enrolled as officers of the King's Court of Record under the provisions of the 1729 Act are gentlemen.

So far, so good, but Mr. Lund's researches fired me with a desire to try to find the evidence upon which Edmund Christian based his assertion that it is 'widely known' that a solicitor is a gentleman by Act of Parliament. William Ewart Gladstone, despite the fact that he entered Lincoln's Inn in 1833, was not amongst the *cognoscenti*, for when, in 1892, John Morley suggested that he should appoint as First Lord of the Admiralty an eminent Wolverhampton solicitor who had already occupied a minor office, the G.O.M. pontificated: 'Well, for the Admiralty I think we require what is called a *gentleman*'. Christian mentions only that John Timbs had suggested that 'the time-honoured belief' may be due to reading the words 'general attorney' in the Statute of Westminster, passed in 1285, as 'gentleman attorney', which really begs the question.

Then, in the issue of an old weekly magazine called *The Legal Guide*, dated Saturday, September 19, 1840, I found an unsigned review of the second edition of a book entitled *Adventures of an Attorney in Search of Practice, or a Delineation of Professional Life*, the first edition of which had been published the previous year. The anonymous reviewer deplored the number of 'low people' in the profession, and then referred to the improved social position of attorneys, and the hundreds 'who are not less gentlemen by birth, by feeling, and by manners than . . . by Act of Parliament'. This was written a couple of months before Sampson Brass' outburst which I have quoted.

### Uneducated Solicitors

But evolution is slow when the evolver is unco-operative. Six years later, in 1846, the House of Commons appointed a committee to inquire into the whole subject of legal education. One of the witnesses was heard to declare 'that there was not one solicitor in fifty, even among the respectable of the profession, who had enjoyed the advantage of an education of anything like the extent of that of a boy in the fifth form of a public school'. But the most important witness was Sir George Stephen, who then acknowledged that he was the anonymous author of *Adventures of an Attorney in Search of a Practice*.

He was, amongst many other questions, asked for his opinion of the state of his profession with reference, in the first instance, to the persons 'who are in the habit of becoming solicitors', and from what grade of society were they chosen. His reply, which is too long to quote *in extenso*, was far from flattering. He began: 'I think that the attorneys, generally speaking, proceed from what I might call perhaps without



offence the inferior branches of society'. He went on to explain that there were doubtless a great number of respectable men in the profession, but that, looking at the profession generally as a class, it consisted 'certainly of inferior men, both in point of station and education'. And much more to the same effect.

The committee was pleased, in a report of over 400 pages, to say that the Law Society had endeavoured to provide for the instruction of the young pupil 'with a very laudable zeal, seconded by much discretion and intelligence', but recorded its view that the attorneys' moral and intellectual education 'alike were 'very inferior'. The conclusion reached was that the root of the evil was the system of remuneration. As Sir George Stephen said: 'Now I apprehend it to be an undoubted maxim that if you pay your attorney upon the same scale or in the same form as you pay your shoe-black, you will soon find yourself obliged to employ a shoe-black for your attorney'.

Whilst on the subject of gentlemanly, if not gentlemen, attorneys, we may note, in passing, a passage in an essay by Samuel Butler, who attacked lawyers, and died in 1680, entitled 'The Character of a Pettifogger'. A pettifogger, as defined by Giles Jacob in his New Law Dictionary (fourth edition, 1739); 'Signifies a Petty Attorney, or inferior Solicitor in the Law; or rather a Pretender to the Law, having neither Law nor Conscience'. And a pettifogger, wrote Samuel Butler, is an under-Coat to the Long-robe, a Kind of coarse Jacket, or dirty tangled Skirt and Tail of the Long-robe. He is no Gentleman, but a Varlet of the Long-robe . . . Was Butler trying to differentiate between the barrister-attorney-gentleman and the solicitor-pettifogger-no gentleman?

#### Jeremiah Jarvis

Apart from the anonymous reviewer in *The Legal Guide*—could it have been Dickens?—I know of only one other contemporary author who refers to the gentleman-attorney and that is Richard Barham, whose *Jerry Jarvis's Wig: A Legend of the Weald of Kent* was published in 1847, two years after his death. The story is set in the year 1761, and the hero, Mr. Jeremiah Jarvis, of Appleton in the Weald of Kent, is described as 'a gentleman by Act of Parliament'.

We are entitled to ask: Which came first—Brass or Jarvis? Dickens' *Old Curiosity Shop* was published in *Master Humphrey's Clock* in 1840, the year in which he was succeeded by Harrison Ainsworth in the editorial chair of Bentley's *Miscellany*, in which periodical Barham's Ingoldsby Legends were published. And it is interesting to recall that Dickens had served as an office boy in a solicitor's office, that Barham was originally intended for the Bar, and that Ainsworth, the son of a solicitor, was himself an articulated clerk before abandoning the law in favour of literature. All of which information can be no more than an incentive to further research. And a final question: Why did Sampson Brass and Jeremiah Jarvis appear almost simultaneously just at that time—in 1840? I believe it was due to the fact that in 1836 was instituted the Solicitors' Final Examination. The Act of 1729 had

required that those desiring to become solicitors should first become articulated clerks, and should be examined by the Judges before being admitted, but in practice the Judge sitting in Chambers had done no more than read the clerk's affidavit proving his service as articulated clerk and, if he felt so inclined, ask a few general questions, before granting his fiat for the applicant's admission.

#### Continuing to 'Manifest Respectability'

In view of the proposed revolutionary examinations in writing, it is not surprising to read in *The Morning Post* of Thursday, June 9, 1836, that the admissions of attorneys during the term were very numerous, and that between thirty and forty had been admitted that morning in the Bail Court previous to their taking the usual oaths. The report continued:

Mr. Justice Coleridge addressed them on the nature of the duties they were about to be called upon to perform. His Lordship, in the course of his observations, said he was happy to learn from the examiners that the results of all the gentlemen who now present themselves to be admitted to practise as attorneys was very satisfactory; that the answers which had been returned to the questions propounded to them were of such a nature as to satisfy the examiners that there were no obstacles to their admission; and besides, their conduct had been very gentlemanly, so that on no account had it been necessary to reject any of the applicants. He hoped, therefore, that when upon the rolls of the Court and in practice their conduct would be such as not to remove the impression which their examination had made, but that they would continue to manifest that respectability which was so necessary to maintain their character as attorneys and officers of the Court.

And *The Times* on the following day reported Mr. Justice Park's remarks in similar strain to several attorneys admitted in the Court of Common Pleas.

It was at the instigation of the Law Society that for such perfunctory performance was substituted the Final Examination, intended to discover the applicants' knowledge of the principles and practice of law, the first of which was held in Michaelmas term, 1836, in the Hall of the Society. Lord Russell expressed himself as satisfied with the examination, but Samuel Warren, when lecturing on Legal Education some twenty years later, declared that it was so difficult that not one in ten of the attorneys then practising could have passed it. As a matter of fact, an unsuccessful examinee was entitled to appeal to the judges, and one candidate was bold enough to exercise the right, but, says Christian, his success was not equal to his courage.

But the thing to note is that at that time—in 1836—anyone interested in legal reform, as must have been the readers of *The Legal Guide*, as Dickens certainly, and Barham probably, was, would have had his attention directed to the Act of 1729, and I believe that Sampson Brass was a 'gentleman' who wished to emphasise that he had passed his Final Examination, whilst Jeremiah Jarvis was a gentleman by virtue of the Act of 1729—a subtle difference which both Dickens and Barham may be presumed to have appreciated.

—Third Programme

## Letters to the Editor

The Editor welcomes letters on broadcasting subjects or topics arising out of articles or talks printed in THE LISTENER but reserves the right to shorten letters for reasons of space

#### The Future of the Humanities

Sir,—Mr. Newton invites me to admit that my carelessness was responsible for my remark that Tudor and even Stuart England are becoming as remote from us in sentiment as early China. I will do nothing of the kind. If your readers would judge on this issue between Mr. Newton and myself let them compare our life now with that of an Elizabethan and with that of a member of any remote civilisation. Let him consider how those three stand in point of all those factors which determine the daily quality of life and thought, in point of hunger, pain, cold, disease, insecurity, toil, inequality, aristocracy, war, priesthood, leisure, superstition, politics, urbanisation, transport, travel, natural

knowledge, the subordination of women, the perils of child-bed, the mortality of children and, since Mr. Newton rightly lays so much stress on the values of literary culture, the range of literacy.

When I make a careful comparison on all these and on many other points it seems to me quite plain that we are well across the threshold of an epoch of human life as different from that of all past civilisations as theirs was different from that of the pastors and hunters who preceded them. They all therefore sink back into a common remoteness.

To a literary man at work in his study these differences may not appear very striking; but it is a mistake to suppose that the walls of a study

are the frontiers of the world. And this is not a merely speculative point; for the view that one takes of it determines the open-mindedness with which one approaches the present problems of our education.

But Mr. Newton's main charge against me is that I am a casual relinquisher of our humane and spiritual culture. I have never been quite sure what those slippery phrases are supposed to mean. 'Spiritual culture' refers, I hope, to loving God and one's neighbour as best one can; and despite Mr. Newton's quaint imputation to me of 'marxism' I am sure that your readers will not need to be persuaded that that ultimate training of the heart has no intrinsic connection with literary education and is perfectly com-



patible with science and with the new social education for which I argued. 'Humane culture', I take it, means the use of the literature, painting, music, sculpture, and architecture of the past to sharpen our sense of the range and depth and needs of the human mind. I can assure Mr. Newton that no one could believe more firmly than I do in that end and in those means and I gladly withdraw such rhetorical flourishes in my talk as may have given the contrary impression. But a prolonged literary education appears to me to be neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition of humane culture in that sense, and even in many cases to work against it. Painting can make you humane, as well as books; some of the best readers that I know never received an advanced literary education; many of those who did remain completely insensitive; and to study literature elaborately before your emotions are mature enough to enable you to understand it is to risk a surfeiting of taste from which you may never recover.

Of course I am a pragmatist in education: I would be a fool if I were not. We have to teach our children to live in this world, not in another of our free contrivance. We cannot choose whether or not to compete with America and Russia: as a question of bread and butter we have got to do so. Mr. Newton will not be able to perpetuate his culture through full-time students: there will be proportionately so few of them that culture, if left to them, will disappear. But culture as I understand it does not need, and will be better without, such specialised literary study; and so I unrepentantly urge those who are devoted to the investigation of human experience and of society to work out the quite new ways in which alone their devotion can now be transmitted to the young.—Yours, etc.,  
Oxford J. P. CORBETT

### China Revisited

Sir,—Mr. Guy Wint may like to know that I was the lawyer quoted by Dr. Purcell and that I am not, and have never been, either a Communist or a fellow-traveller. It was certainly my impression, and I know that of all the party of western lawyers (the vast majority of whom were not Communists either) who visited China in April, that mass trials had then ceased. This impression was not derived solely from what we ourselves saw (which was necessarily limited) nor from what we were told by the Chinese (which we discounted) but also from statements made to us in private conversations with a number of European diplomats, journalists, and business men most of whom were by no means wholly sympathetic to the new regime. Things may have changed since we and Dr. Purcell left but I know of no evidence to suggest that mass trials have been resumed; indeed, all the evidence that I have seen points to the contrary.

Mr. Wint obviously confuses mass trials with People's Courts. The former were not judicial processes at all but, as the Chinese themselves said, acts of mass vengeance. Whether one likes it or not (Mr. Wint obviously does not) the new regime is now too firmly established to need any longer to encourage such lamentable demonstrations. 'People's Courts' is the name given to the normal courts in Iron Curtain countries. In China, and in most other such countries, these, when exercising their original jurisdiction, are presided over by a legally qualified judge and two lay assessors. Their constitution and procedure can be criticised (we did) but they are totally different from mass trials; indeed, the many People's Courts which we saw conducted themselves with exemplary dignity, fairness, and patience—though of course they may not have been typical—and our criticisms were mainly directed to the pre-trial procedure. Mr.

Wint seems to object to the fact that the public are admitted and that (according to a probably unreliable press report of one trial) the spectators expressed their emotions. Surely Mr. Wint does not wish the public to be excluded? Western lawyers regard trial in open court as an essential safeguard of the Rule of Law—and happily Chinese lawyers seem now to share this view. As for the expression of emotion—this, too, is not unknown in English trials and, within limits, may not be undesirable. In fact, however, in all the trials which we saw the public were completely silent throughout.

In conclusion perhaps I may say that Dr. Purcell's broadcast seemed to me eminently fair and objective and my personal impressions were much the same as his. Those who criticise on the basis of their own prejudices might at least try to check and correct these by personal investigation, as we did.—Yours, etc.,  
Harpenden L. C. B. GOWER

Sir,—Dr. Purcell says that he is exposing a fake translation of an article in the Peking *People's Daily*. May I set side by side the literal translation of the relevant passage from the newspaper, and the version which Dr. Purcell is questioning. The exact translation is as follows:

There were more than 1,000 cadres of various categories, soldiers and workers, who all raised their eyes angrily looking at this political cheat who had wormed his way into a government organisation. Li had originally hoped to use forged letters and documents to gain honour for himself. But today he received the punishment of the people.

The summary which appeared in English and which Dr. Purcell says was faked reads:

There was an audience of over 1,000 government cadres, service men and workers casting angry glances at the culprit. Li had tried to obtain honour and position with faked papers. Instead he received the penalty meted out by the people.

How can any rational person say that the second version was faked? The only difference of any importance is that one version speaks of a political cheat and the other of a culprit.

Yours, etc.,

Wantage

GUY WINT

Sir,—I would like to comment on points arising from correspondence on Dr. Purcell's talk, 'China Revisited', published in THE LISTENER of September 20.

With regard to the translation of the term used by *The People's Daily* to describe Li Wan-Ming I would point out that in practice, once a person is arrested he is referred to neither as 'accused' nor 'culprit' but simply as a 'criminal' (Fan Jen). The arrested person is told that as a criminal he loses the privileges enjoyed by the people and consequently forfeits all rights. Should he persist in proclaiming his innocence he is informed that the Government, or in Peking terminology the 'people', cannot err and that it is up to the prisoner himself to 'solve his problem'.

It is made quite clear that there are only two courses open to him: either confess and receive the leniency of the people or remain stubborn and be 'suppressed'. Over a long period, months or even years, of interrogation combined with thought reform, followed by a process that is termed 'awakening' (Ch'i-fa)—a more practical translation would be 'thought seduction'—the prisoner is reduced to mental pulp. (Dr. Purcell may be interested to know that I saw plenty of evidence of physical torture of varying degrees during this softening-up process.)

Finally, the prisoner is brought before the Court, and a defending counsel may be present.

The trial, if it may be called such, is merely a formality of sentencing and will probably be the first time the prisoner hears the crimes with which he is charged. I fail to see the function of a defending counsel at such a stage. Surely it would be more fitting if the defending counsel were available during the long period of interrogation. Incidentally, the prisoner is quite likely to have been sent out to forced labour, or as it is termed 'reform through labour', before the sentencing.

Dr. Purcell's talk and subsequent letters seem to be in much the same vein as the alleged new academic freedom in China where, according to one Chinese writer, 'the themes and scope of literary works should be unlimited: one may either praise the new society or criticise the old society'.—Yours, etc.,

London, N.W.11

R. W. FORD

[This correspondence is now closed.—EDITOR, THE LISTENER]

### A Myth of Catastrophe

Sir,—Mr. Frank Kermode (THE LISTENER, November 8 and 15) makes some shrewd points against the thesis of dissociation of sensibility, which is today largely considered in terms of the expositions of Mr. T. S. Eliot. But though he successfully argues that some aspects of the thesis apply to all historical periods, he fails to dispose of certain cogencies in Mr. Eliot's argument.

It remains true that the poet's struggle with dissociation has relations that extend far beyond the literary sphere and that the issue assumed special and urgent forms with the great extension of mechanistic thought in the seventeenth century culminating in Newton.

To claim that it has 'nothing to do with history' is possible only for someone thinking in watertight compartments. It is in no way correct to assert that

The notion of a historical dissociation is posterior to, and dependent upon, the notion of aesthetic dissociation. The argument proceeds from disorganised art, through the disorganised artist to a disorganised society and its historical causes.

Poets have argued that way, but the case can be put in the opposite direction. Carlyle attacked his society for its egoist failure to maintain organic values from the angle of the cash-nexus and its 'thingifying' of men, a conception that goes to the heart of the problem of dissociation. The Young Hegelians in their work on Alienation—again a conception that goes deep into the dissociative process—were concerned with the whole of human experience and history; and Marx, taking over their terms, showed the link of spiritual alienation with the economic form that alienated the producer from both the productive act and the product, that alienated man from the life-process, from nature and from his sensuous self.

True, in looking back nostalgically to comparatively more integrated periods, thinkers like Hulme or poets like Yeats romanticise, and built up mental utopias in the past; but the essential bearing of their thought was on real and immediate things, on history as well as art.

What seems to me lacking in Mr. Eliot's presentation is a concrete analysis of what has gone on since the seventeenth century. The tendency to treat dissociation as a sad lapse that occurred once for all and has kept on repeating itself at a dead level justifies Mr. Kermode's ridicule of *Myth of Catastrophe*. But in fact there has been a continual struggle of integration which has asserted itself against the particular forms taken at the given moment by the deepening forces of dissociation and alienation; and to grasp this



struggle in its fullness more than a literary analysis is needed.—Yours, etc.,  
Castle Hedingham

JACK LINDSAY

### The New 'Establishment' in Criticism

Sir,—Before this correspondence closes, may I return to one of Mr. Holloway's original points? I agree with him that 'there is nothing whatever in a play . . . which we could conceivably study in any way save by a study of the language of the play', at least while it is a text and not a performance that we have in mind. But while to the literary critic this may be a truism, and Professor Knights and I can apparently be blamed for mentioning it, it is in practice not only not obvious, but even widely disputed.

The intention of Professor Knights' argument was to propose a method of Shakespearean criticism more satisfactory than that fashionable method which had been based on reactions to the nineteenth-century novel. My own intention, in relation to the modern drama, was to propose a criticism which did not start from the assumptions of that naturalist approach to drama which I wished to oppose. I stated the principle with which Mr. Holloway agrees, in opposition to other statements by supporters of the naturalist drama, which explicitly or implicitly denied it. I have no reason to believe that this controversy is yet over: the relapse to naturalism in the new drama of the last five years is indeed giving naturalist dramatic criticism a new lease of life.

Mr. Holloway, instead of recognising the contemporary implications of our agreed principle in this difficult dramatic controversy, turned instead to suppose that I disparaged 'form, and action, and character, as conventions' (THE LISTENER, September 27). But these 'conventions' are neither simple nor constant. To criticise the naturalist version of 'character', and its conventions, is not to undervalue character-conventions as such. To criticise the naturalist version of 'action', as I did in more detail in *Drama in Performance*, is not to underrate dramatic action. These versions, or the fashionable conception of 'form', should not be isolated from, or allowed to determine, our response to the play as a whole.

If I can restate my principle, it is this: that we begin with the text, which is a finished work in language; that we set this text in its context of performance, which will include conventions of form, character, and action, of which the dramatist was aware, and for which he wrote; and that we then, trying to offer an articulate piece of criticism, argue and illustrate from the whole complex—such illustration being often, necessarily, from the thing we can be sure of touching, the actual language of the play. The process is difficult, and occasional mistakes of emphasis seem inevitable, but we should be a long way on—farther, I think, than in fact we generally are—if even the principle had come near to being 'established'.

Yours, etc.,

RAYMOND WILLIAMS

Hastings

This correspondence is now closed.—EDITOR,  
THE LISTENER]

### The Dead Sea Scrolls

Sir,—Allow me to make a brief reply to your reviewer's reply to my reply to his review of Professor Burrows' book, *The Dead Sea Scrolls*.

(1) The new Isaiah manuscript, in 52:14, does read *mashahti*. Your reviewer says that this is due to 'a moment of extreme irresponsibility' on the part of the scribe who copied it. Dr. Brownlee perfectly recognised that the scribe might be responsible for this reading.

The point is that, even if this were true, it would seem to indicate a Messianic preoccupation on the part of the Dead Sea sect.

(2) It does not require even 'a glimmering of Hebrew palaeography' to see the various forms of *mem* in the facsimiles of the Dead Sea Isaiah published by Dr. Burrows and his colleagues. Why should your reviewer expect the idiosyncrasies of the script of this manuscript to be reproduced in a printed transcription?

(3) Your reviewer asserts that the form *nethibhim*, 'for which Mr. Wilson vainly tries to find some shadow of confirmation, has never existed'. My shadow of confirmation is to be found in Gesenius' dictionary, in which he gives both the masculine and feminine plurals.

(4) In regard to the supposed mistakes in Aramaic in Dr. Burrows' dedication—why doesn't your reviewer tell us what he thinks they are?—Professor Torrey, 'the distinguished Aramaist' (as your reviewer says), is not, I learn, aware of their existence.

I taxed your reviewer, in my previous letter, with getting a reference to Isaiah wrong. He now points out that the reference in this letter to Isaiah 52:11 should be Isaiah 52:14. I do not know how this error occurred. In my book the verse is given correctly. But, in any case, in the matter of incorrect references to Isaiah, your reviewer and I are now even.

Yours, etc.,

EDMUND WILSON

Wellfleet, Mass.

### The Concert of Europe

Sir,—Your reviewer (THE LISTENER, November 8) dealt kindly with my book, *Bismarck, Gladstone, and the Concert of Europe*, but we appear to differ on two points. He seems to think that I have ascribed the failure of Gladstone's plans for establishing the Concert of Europe solely to Bismarck's opposition. This was certainly not my intention. I dealt at length with all the other reasons for its failure, and I think made it abundantly clear that the opposition of the Sultan, the timidity of Austria and France, Gladstone's own contradictory attitude, and so on, all played their part. The fact that Bismarck was hostile from the start nevertheless remains; his policy was to take all the advantage he could of Gladstone's difficulties in order to forward his own programme of alliance.

The second point concerns the origins of Anglo-German rivalry. Your reviewer doubts whether in 1880 and 1881 there was, in addition to the personal Bismarck-Gladstone antipathy, any 'deeper conflict between opposite systems of foreign policy'. He thinks that this began only in 1885, 'when Gladstone was succeeded by Salisbury and emotionalism in foreign policy was replaced by good sense'. I am sure this view is wrong. Bismarck distrusted not only Gladstone but England's general unreliability, as he saw it; he ascribed it to political conditions which were particularly accentuated under a Liberal Government, but which could never be entirely absent from a parliamentary state. Some of his followers went much further, notably during the period of Tory rule from 1874 to 1880. On the British side suspicion of possible German aggression and militarism was never entirely absent after the events of the 1860s. I have nothing particularly original to offer on these points, which have been the subject of books by R. J. Sontag, Eva Maria Baum, Wilhelm Schüssler, and others. But there seems no doubt that the violence of Bismarck's diatribes against Gladstone was due precisely to the fact that the underlying suspicions of English Liberalism went so deep.

Yours, etc.,

London, S.W.15

W. N. MEDLICOTT

[Our reviewer writes:

In reply to Professor Medlicott's first point, I hoped I had made it clear that what troubled me was the discrepancy between his introductory argument and his subsequent analysis of the failure of the concert. With the analysis I had no quarrel; but it seemed to square badly with such statements in Chapter I that 'further developments in Bismarck's alliance system . . . defeated Gladstone's dream of a united Europe'.

As for the second point, it depends what you mean by Anglo-German rivalry. Of course, Bismarck distrusted England's general unreliability. But he distrusted nearly every other Power as well; and his distrust of Russia, for example, did not prevent him from working with Russia. Later on, a Liberal Government in England also distrusted autocratic Russia, but that did not prevent the development of the Anglo-Russian entente after 1907. It is one thing to establish the sources of mutual suspicion between England and Germany before 1882, quite another thing to unravel the origins of the concrete divergence of interests between the two that later became so serious a problem. A good deal of the work done on this problem, some of which is mentioned by Professor Medlicott, is vitiated by the failure to make this distinction.]

### 'The Less Deceived'

Sir,—May I assure Mr. Hough that I share his admiration for Mr. Philip Larkin's poetry, and that that is why what seems to me certain faults of attitude in it are of concern to me? I can hardly think I implied that the *versification* of 'Church Going' was 'embarrassingly gauche': it is anything but, and the latter part of my review makes it clear that that must be my opinion. What puzzles and distresses me is that the poet of the close, capable of writing the grave and thoughtful stanza beginning:

A serious house on serious earth it is,

In whose blent air all our compulsions meet, should be the same person as the brash ignoramus of the opening, fooling about on the lectern, 'donating his Irish sixpence', and boasting non-acquaintance with elementary architectural details with which the inevitable 'Church Guide', if nothing else, would supply him. And cycle-clips are necessary and useful objects, but most persons of the poet's sensibility would perform the 'ungraceful operation' of removing them in the churchyard or the road.

But of course Mr. Larkin is in fact a great deal more learned and sensitive than in the opening of this poem he chooses to pretend, and this brashness and ignorance are plainly assumed, presumably in deference to what I unrepentantly call the cult of 'Lucky Jim'. I am never quite sure what a 'critical category' is, but is it not fair to say that 'Jim' is a convenient and potentially valuable label for a certain set of attitudes now current and expressed both socially and through the art of literature? It is of course a label that must be used with caution, but that is always so.

Yours, etc.,

YOUR REVIEWER

### National Character

Sir,—The 'Brains Trust' (my favourite item on television) seemed to have great difficulty (on Sunday, November 18) in dealing with the question asking for the national characteristics of the Scots, Welsh, Irish, and English. In a nutshell, the answer seems to be:

The Scots are noted for keeping the Sabbath, and everything else they can lay their hands on.

The Welsh are noted for always praying on their knees,—and on their neighbours.

The Irish seem to have no idea what they believe in, but are quite willing to die for it.

The English pride themselves on being a self-made people, and have an implicit faith in their Creator!

Yours, etc.,

L. J. R. CRIPPS

Worthing



## Art

# The British Face

By GEOFFREY GRIGSON

**T**HIS winter's Academy show of British portraits celebrates in part the centenary (1856 to 1956) of the Wormwood Scrubbs of British Painting—in other words, of the National Portrait Gallery. 'No art-stuff in here', says the governor of the N.P.G., sharply, brutally, to the quivering new picture committed for life. 'You're not Art in here. Art is for the highbrows next door. You're Evidence'. And the warders salute, and the howling (or complacent Evidence is removed to be photographed and catalogued and racked in darkness, or hung in nearly equal darkness in the corner of an uncrannied wall.

Do these same prison principles now extend, for a whole winter, into Burlington House? They do and they do not. For one thing, there is no monotony in the exhibition, in matters of Art (superficially) or Evidence. Four centuries, 400 artists, see to that. Different styles, manners, poses, compositions, faces, dress, and notions of importance prevent monotony in all these exhibits; many of which do, however faintly at times in their shallows, feel a far-off, central, unprovincial flow of painting. And suppose you stop, and frown, and dare to ask how a committee of devotees of art could ever have allowed this portrait or that portrait in the house, the committee does shift. It does not quite say 'They are all here, the soapy, the snooty, the thin-lipped, the scarecrows, honeys, harpies, bores, bosses, heroes, the stuffed, genuine, gentle, all the historical essence, and social scum'; but it does shift from Art to Evidence, does excuse itself by saying that it takes two to make a portrait, and that the exhibition is British People as well as British Portraits.

I find this a naïve excuse for the vilest enduring element in English painting, about which this exhibition reveals a great deal. March past Sir Gerald Kelly in bronze and up the steps, and wheel to the right: you are among the Tudors, delighted (I hope) by the direct honesties and clarities of Hans Holbein and Hans Eworth. Wheel left, and you are horrified (I trust) by the mud and fake and feebleness of Watts and Leighton and their pretentious milieu.

Advance neither right nor left. Plunge into mid-glory, into the eighteenth century. Apart from a few particular observations—how English sitters, for example, could freeze the gay Liotard into dullness, or how Reynolds could feel and design and paint (No. 204. Lieut. Ourry, R.N.) when he was young and still outside the social and spiritual refrigerator—apart from details, ask if the carefully selected exhibits do not suggest that 'the great period of British portraiture' may not, after all, have been seedy, mean, and presumptuous? Ask yourself—if you have not been mesmerised by decades of sales talk—whether many of the famous portraitists (excepting Reynolds when he was young, and Gainsborough and Allan Ramsay at their most delightful) were not, after all, in a deeper analysis, dull of eye and innocent of talent?

Wasn't the eye so narrowed to faces, professional practice, and guineas, that the hand, for one thing, was unable to draw? 'De English may be very clever in deir own opinions, but dey do not draw de draw',

said Gravelot, who taught Gainsborough, as an exception, to draw d; and of Reynolds it was said that his drawing was hidden under the pigment. Deeply hidden.

But one sees, as one moves from gallery to gallery, how in the end a dishonesty of spirit, a conformity to social spirit and sitter's requirement, underlies every inadequacy of means. Through the galleries a graph zigzags on either side of the line between honesty and dishonesty.

The idea of man—or woman—may be universal, or may be social. A Hans Eworth from Antwerp depicting Sir John Luttrell (No. 18) or Lady Burghley (No. 27) defers to a universal idea of man, deeply, honestly, founded. A Watts or Leighton from Kensington defers to a social, and national or provincial, idea, founded upon shallow pretensions of class and upon spiritual mannerism. A strong face by Eworth affords conviction, a soft face by Watts provokes—or should provoke—incredulity and disgust. A deeply founded idea of man may justify a painter's limitation of himself to portraiture; a pretentious social idea of man, soon after the Tudor period, soon after mid-eighteenth century, soon after mid-nineteenth century, attracts only the pretentious artist to its exclusive expression.

So on the whole many of the best portraits at Burlington House—and in English painting—are those by painters not exclusively or chiefly portraitists. Look for portraits by painters with a wider vision—at any rate, after the Tudor period. Look for Constable drawn by Constable (No. 704), Keene painted by Keene (No. 467), or Gwen John by Gwen John (No. 474)—even at James Barr, drawn by himself (No. 655), as an example of feeling surmounting lack of expertise.

Much as can be found in more than 800 examples of painting, drawing sculpture by English and other artists. I can fairly complain of the absence

of a critical plan or set of principles. The exhibition is founded not only on taking two to make a portrait, but upon the *cliché* that portraiture is not the essence alone, but also the excellence of most of English painting. This leads to a big undifferentiated anthology, to astonishing omissions and astonishing inclusions; to snobbishness; also to one particular flaw—of not noticing, or not acknowledging, how in contrast to the insincerities of the later eighteenth-century portrait painters round and after the turn of the century (often obscure but talented ones) looked their sitters again in the eye and the wart on the crease and the flesh. So Constable drew his great nose. So in 1853 at the end of the move to naturalism, Holman Hunt could paint Canon Jenkins (No. 432) with a satisfying Tudor directness.

In the catalogue, by the way, it is remarked that the French have national portrait gallery 'which has not been open to the public during the present century'. How relevant.

The 'Pietà' by Roger van der Weyden from the collection of Lord Pow has been acquired for the National Gallery in part-satisfaction of estate duty. The painting is not yet on exhibition, but photographs are on sale



'Canon Jenkins, of Jesus College, Oxford', by Holman Hunt: from the Royal Academy exhibition, 'British Portraits'



# The Listener's Book Chronicle

## The Life of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu By R. Halsband. Oxford. 30s.

THE *pièce de résistance* of Mr. Halsband's life of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu is a series of hitherto unpublished love letters from her to Count Algarotti, the eminent Italian man of letters and friend of Voltaire and Frederick the Great. Byron, who saw these letters at Venice in 1817, was much struck with them, describing them as 'very pretty and passionate'—'the French not good but the sentiments beautiful'. Considering that Lady Mary is reckoned the English Sévigné, it seems a pity that Mr. Halsband, to whom we owe their re-discovery, could not have printed them in full, instead of treating them merely as raw material for his book.

From a biographical point of view, the importance of these letters is that they supply the answer to a question which had defeated all Lady Mary's previous editors and biographers, namely, why she retired to Italy at the age of fifty. They show that she went there in pursuit of Algarotti, with whom, though old enough to be her mother, she proposed to spend the rest of her life at Venice. On the eve of her departure she wrote to him:

*Je laisse mes amis pleurant ma perte et franches le pas hardiment pour un autre monde. Si je vous trouve tel que vous m'avez juré, je trouve les champs élysée, et la félicité au delà de l'imagination; si—mais je ne veux plus douter; et du moins je veux jouir de mes espérances. Si vous voulez me récompenser tout ce que je sacrifie, hâtez vous me trouver a Venise, où je presserai mon arriée autant qu'il m'est possible.*

Algarotti, who was then at St. Petersburg, made no attempt to keep the assignation. Returning to London, he shortly afterwards received and accepted an invitation from Frederick the Great to come to Berlin, became an original member of Frederick's new Academy, and remained in Germany for the rest of his working life.

In spite of Algarotti's defection, Lady Mary was managed to console herself in Italy. For many years she maintained a friendship, which Mr. Halsband regards as 'baffling', with an Italian nobleman, Count Palazzi, also young enough to be her son. Hitherto all that has been known of this affair is contained in a letter from Horace Walpole to Mann mentioning an obscure story current in London 'that a young fellow whom she set out with keeping has taken it into his head to keep her close prisoner, not permitting her to write or receive any letters but what he sees: he seems determined, if her husband should die, not to lose her'. Mr. Halsband has found an affidavit, drawn up by Lady Mary after she had escaped from this entanglement, from which it appears that this story was substantially correct and that Count Palazzi, before he had finished with her, had extracted from her sums amounting to over £2,500. The affair was public property in Anglo-Italian circles; the British Minister at Venice reported on it to his government; and according to the Commander-in-Chief of the Venetian forces, General Graeme, he had been asked by the Butes to find out what was happening to Lady Mary, she herself as 'more ashamed . . . for passing for a dupe in the eye of the public than she is for passing for a woman of gallantry'.

It might have been supposed that these episodes were open to only one interpretation. Mr. Halsband, however, doubts 'whether there is any element of sexual passion' in Lady Mary's love for Algarotti, and expresses the

opinion that there is little likelihood of any 'amorous involvement' between her and Count Palazzi. He is not prepared to accept Pope's attacks on her character, on the ground that they are uncorroborated by other contemporary writers; and discounts Horace Walpole's testimony, which corroborates Pope on all points, as due to a 'deep subconscious feeling' of hostility to Lady Mary: in other words, to a feeling for which there is no documentary evidence.

Notwithstanding this reluctance to recognise the implications of the facts which he has spent years in collecting from the public and private archives of half a dozen countries, scattered over three continents, Mr. Halsband has written a book which is incomparably the best biography of Lady Mary and likely to remain so for many years to come.

## Chisungu. By Audrey Richards. Faber. 42s.

In her first monograph for nearly twenty years Dr. Audrey Richards has devoted the whole volume to the most detailed description and analysis of a single ceremony, the *chisungu* initiation performed for a couple of nubile girls during three weeks of June 1931 at the village of Cisonde in the Bemba country of North Eastern Rhodesia. For the Africanist, indeed for all anthropologists, this account is intrinsically of the greatest interest; for although there has been considerable speculation about initiation rites, most descriptions have come from informants, rather than spectators and (as Dr. Richards illustrates by quoting informants' accounts of the ceremonies she did witness) these give little light on the complexity and amplitude of the actual rites. A further point of interest is the use of pottery figurines in these rites; although the Bemba figurines seem to have been of little aesthetic value, the description of their employment does illustrate the nexus between art object, symbol, and ritual which is basic to the understanding of most of the art of Africa. Furthermore the ceremonies are dying out, as traditional Bemba life is disrupted by the young men leaving to earn cash wages in the mines and by the success of missionary activities. For all these reasons the book is to be welcomed; and even without any of them it would still be welcome, for Dr. Audrey Richards is perhaps the most distinguished pupil of the late Bronislaw Malinowski and, owing to heavy teaching duties, she has published far too little; she has a depth of insight, and an agreeable manner of exposition, which make the purely sociological analyses of many of her colleagues seem arid indeed.

Since the value of this work consists above all in the elaboration of the detail, a summary would be a useless distortion. In the section on the interpretation of the ceremony Dr. Richards explores a great number of the implications and makes the very welcome statement:

The emotional and intellectual needs of individuals, as they are conditioned by the society in which they are brought up, seem to me a proper study for social anthropologists, as proper as the analysis of institutionalised roles, social relationships or social groups on which so much emphasis has been laid recently.

In conformity with this most sensible view, Dr. Richards describes the feeling tone and emotional responses of the actors in the many ceremonies which make up the rite. It seems, however, arguable that, from her own data, she has considerably under-rated the irrational elements in

Bemba culture with its curiously dominant symbolism and ritual of the antithesis of sex and fire. The Bemba are strongly matrilineal and uxori-local (the husband living in the wife's community and earning his wife by his labour); and it seems at least theoretically possible that this uncommon type of social organisation needs a considerable elaboration of symbolism and ritual for its continued maintenance.

## The Schellenberg Memoirs. Edited and translated by Louis Hagen. Andre Deutsch. 25s.

Walter Schellenberg was the right-hand man of both Heydrich and Himmler, directing their foreign espionage and the crimes or attempted crimes which this involved. After the arrest of Admiral Canaris in 1944 Schellenberg became head of the combined secret services of Germany, under Himmler still, and with a personal enemy, the Austrian Ernst Kaltenbrunner, as Heydrich's successor in command of the Reichssicherheitshauptamt or R.S.H.A. In an excellent introduction, which is really more enlightening than the memoirs themselves, Mr. Bullock finds no reason to doubt their authenticity.

Among Schellenberg's successes the British reader may be most interested in the account of his kidnapping of Captain Best and Major Stevens at Venlo; this was done because Hitler wished to revenge himself upon the British Secret Service for the attempt upon his life in the Beer Cellar on November 9, 1939, made quite independently by the carpenter, Elser. Among his abortive crimes Schellenberg had to count his failure to kidnap the Duke of Windsor in Lisbon in July 1940 when Ribbentrop had decided that the Duke was to be 'liberated' from British surveillance. Many other chapters in these memoirs read like rather light Conan Doyle, the affair of the Vickinghoff brothers, the Polish agent 'K', and so on. The whole book expresses the essential shallowness of Schellenberg. Indeed, apart from Mr. Bullock's, the most significant sentences in this whole publication are those used by the journalist sent to see Schellenberg in Italy shortly before his death. The visitor, Herr Harpprecht, described Schellenberg as having 'not one single feature out of the ordinary. . . . His politeness was too forced to be perfect, in spite of his natural charm. His voice was soft, but the negligence with which he formulated his phrases was not always convincing'.

Schellenberg's memoirs demonstrate that he was not merely shallow and commonplace, but that he was false and cruel as well, the typical 'gentleman Nazi'. No doubt he hoped that the comparative detachment with which he wrote would prove disarming, and there is considerable danger that this assumption will now be justified. But the critical reader will observe that he cared about nothing but his own advancement. He had no illusions about Heydrich, Himmler, and the rest, yet he joined them as colleagues willingly; he reveals Heydrich's fear of Himmler and Bormann in 1942, and leaves one to conclude that either of them might have been responsible for Heydrich's death. No amount of human suffering mattered to Schellenberg until he realised that his own career might be cut short by Germany's defeat; by the nature of his job this realisation came earlier to him than to others.

There is much inaccuracy in his work but this same nature of his job makes it





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essary for historians to give the memoirs a  
ce. He knew a great deal about Germany's  
against Russia and about her relations with  
Far East. He describes Heydrich's forged  
ence against Tukachevsky as an integral part  
Hitler's policy towards Russia which then  
ered in the German-Soviet pact of August  
9. It is characteristic, however, that when he  
s with the case of Richard Sorge, the Com-  
unist German Press Attaché in Tokyo, he not  
gets his facts wrong—for Sorge was  
sted by the Japanese in October 1941, not as  
ellenberg says in the summer of 1942. In  
ition Schellenberg does not seem aware of  
interesting probability that Sorge contri-  
ed to Stalin's decision to come to terms with  
er by informing Moscow that Hitler was  
dds with Tokyo because the Japanese would  
y negotiate with him in terms of hostility to  
U.S.S.R. while Hitler pressed them for an  
nce against the West, Sorge may have dis-  
ed the Russians' distrust.  
chellenberg's memoirs are both welcome and  
ous because authorities like Mr. Reitlinger  
Mr. Crankshaw have dealt slightly or not at  
with the foreign service of the S.D.; thus  
e is at present no warning pilot to steer the  
er through these sinister waters.

# **The Royalists during the Puritan Revolution. By Paul H. Hardacre.** Batsford. 25s.

s book is one of a series by American  
lars entitled 'International Scholars Forum'  
printed at The Hague. It is extremely well  
duced and completely free from typographi-  
errors. The subject was suggested to the  
or by the distinguished seventeenth-century  
orian, Mr. Godfrey Davies, and it is a useful  
conscientious piece of work.  
on after the time when King Charles I left  
don there were still possibilities of reconcilia-  
between him and the Long Parliament. The  
rences between the two sides, between men  
Pym and Hyde, might still have been  
ged. But 'Parliament insisted that the  
inquents'—the men who had left London  
joined the King in the north—should be  
ished. In the Nineteen Propositions sent  
he King in July, 1642, Parliament again  
anded the censure and punishment of all  
quents. In September in a declaration of  
aims Parliament said that there could be  
rue until the King withdrew his protection  
the delinquents. After Parliament gained  
upper hand in the civil war the Royalists  
heavily mulcted and fined, the more so if  
happened also to be Roman Catholics. Thus  
liament to a large extent created the Royalists  
made them bitter.  
hen Oliver Cromwell became Lord Protec-  
the Government's severity was relaxed and  
Royalists' condition temporarily improved.  
the widespread conspiracy of the early  
ths of 1655, of which the outward sign was  
ruddock's rising, was followed by the institu-  
of 'decimations', a capital levy upon the  
alists, and little chance then existed of recon-  
g them to the Commonwealth. Yet they  
suffered so severely that it was not they,  
discontented Cromwellians like Monck and  
tagu, who brought about the Restoration.  
fter the Restoration the Royalists did not  
ive all the compensation they hoped for their  
lty, largely because they were not the people  
had brought it about. Nevertheless there is  
on to suppose that many of them got back  
properties. An investigation by Mrs. Thirk-  
the land settlement in south-east England  
ted by Professor Hardacre) showed that in  
four cases did Royalists fail to regain their  
s confiscated' during the Interregnum by  
means or another. On the other hand, in

his conclusion Professor Hardacre expresses the  
opinion that social changes must have resulted  
as a consequence of the economic losses suffered  
by the less affluent Royalists during the Civil  
War. Here is a subject that deserves deeper  
investigation.

## **Gorillas Were My Neighbours**

**By F. G. Merfield, with H. Miller.**  
Longmans. 18s.

Mr. Merfield spent many years in the French  
Camerouns where he became one of the best  
known white hunters. Soon after he settled there  
he was absorbed by the stories he heard of the  
enormous gorillas in certain up-country districts,  
and of the way the natives hunted them to  
protect their crops. The gorilla's proper habitat  
is the remote mountain regions of the territory,  
but when a band takes up its quarters near a  
native village and starts reaping where it has  
not sown, it soon becomes unpopular with its  
human neighbours.

Merfield penetrated to the real gorilla country  
after several unsuccessful attempts, and—what  
is more—he took his young wife straight out  
from England with him. This book recounts the  
many interesting and strange adventures that  
befell them in that little known territory.  
Although he shot many gorillas, mostly raiders  
of the natives' crops, and preserved their skins  
and skeletons for European museums, his book  
is not a record of indiscriminate killing in spite  
of its illustrations of slaughtered monsters. On  
the contrary it contains much original informa-  
tion on the life of the gorilla, gathered by the  
author from personal observation and published  
here for the first time. Merfield had no use for  
the pseudo-sportsman and big game hunter, but  
he became devoted to certain true naturalists, as  
well he might, for he is one himself.

In the face of all this destruction what is the  
future of the gorilla? Merfield thinks that  
although the spread of cultivation in West Africa  
has reduced the range and numbers of gorillas  
during recent years 'there are vast tracts of  
mountainous forest which are never likely to  
produce those things that men desire, and it may  
be that in these regions the gorilla will manage  
to survive'.

## **British Social Work in the Nineteenth Century. By A. F. Young and E. T. Ashton. Routledge. 25s.**

There is certainly room for a good history of  
the development of social work in Great Britain;  
but this volume, though well intentioned and  
not without merits, is not good enough. The  
opening chapters, which attempt to give an  
account of the background of ideas which in-  
fluenced the development of social work, are  
particularly inadequate and sketchy, and notably  
fail to give any clear picture of the movement  
of ideas during the century. Nor is the account  
of poor law principles and practice much better,  
though there is less to find fault with in a  
positive way. The middle chapters, which deal  
with the development of case work, with the  
activities of the Charity Organisation Society,  
and with the astonishing performances of  
Octavia Hill, are a great deal better, but fail to  
present at all clearly the nature of the long-  
continued quarrel between the C.O.S. and the  
advocates of fuller public provision of social  
services, or even of the battles between the  
C.O.S. and the Salvation Army over the treat-  
ment to be meted out to the 'undeserving  
poor'. Then follow quite competent chapters  
dealing with the care of deprived children, the  
penal services, and the handicapped, and a much  
less satisfying chapter on 'moral welfare'.  
Finally, two very inadequate chapters are given

to 'group work'—one to the settlement move-  
ment and one to work among youth. There is  
nothing at all about the great movements of  
mutual self-help such as the Friendly Societies,  
and very little about the social work of the  
Churches, except where it turns up quite in-  
cidentally. Nor is there any account of hospitals  
or dispensaries.

The authors write competently about social  
case work, which is clearly their central interest;  
but their knowledge of wider social history is  
inadequate for the task they set themselves, and  
this leads them to make an undue number of  
small mistakes, such as the assigning of the  
authorship of *All Sorts and Conditions of Men*  
to a Miss Esther Waters and a mystifying refer-  
ence to Gladstone's Trade Union Act of 1870—  
which the context shows not to be a mere mis-  
print for 1871. Despite these shortcomings the  
book is readable and, where the authors know  
their stuff, positively good. The pity is that it  
is not much better.

## **Ancestral Voices. By Vinh Thai. Trans- lated from the French by James Kirkup. Collins. 13s. 6d.**

Is this China, or only *chinoiserie*? It is a ques-  
tion which haunts the author himself from time  
to time. 'Thai is an *ae-the*', mocks one of  
his companions. 'You are the mandarin', cries  
another, 'who writes poems in golden ink on  
sandalwood boards'. He has, it is generally felt,  
a disquieting detachment, a secret life.

I light one of those copper lamps whose scarlet  
wick coils down like a snake into the oil. The  
flame splutters, and gives off a bitter, briny  
smell. Béla points to the spiral of smoke.

'Look; that is the Chinese vision. And yours'.  
I counter this by saying that I always write very  
precise descriptions. He replies: 'When a Sung  
painter wishes to represent a quail, he draws  
every feather with its markings. But the bird is  
placed in a kind of space which is not of this  
world'.

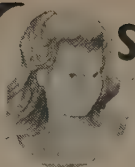
That is exact for this book; Vinh Thai recreates  
objects with a subtle arrangement of simple  
words, and we see these objects in the way we  
perceive the placing of an ideogram in relation  
to the margins of a scroll. Is this the Chinese  
gift? Vinh Thai says somewhere that he is  
drawn to Lao-Tsu, not Confucius; perhaps the  
*tao* is that ancestral voice which refuses to  
meddle, to fuss—the millenary habit of refusing  
to possess. Certainly this writer has nothing of  
Ruskin's and Proust's acquisitive anxiety to-  
wards the visual world.

But who is Vinh Thai? His ancestry, he tells  
us, is in the Book of the Hundred Families, and  
in the seventeenth century this family was exiled  
to Indo-China. His father, as a young man,  
visited France and came so powerfully under its  
spell that he abjured the ancestral gods to follow  
Reason, married a Frenchwoman and, after his  
return to Mekong, determined that the children  
of this marriage should be educated in France.  
The two sons were sent away as soon as pos-  
sible to the schooling he had planned; they were  
still in France when the war overtook them.

In 1943 Vinh Thai joined a secret-service  
mission; its purpose was to make contact with  
the resistance in Indo-China, at that period  
occupied by Japan. The mission was given head-  
quarters in Chung-King, there to await the  
moment when its personnel could be parachuted  
on their objectives, but there they all languished,  
victims of a tortuous diplomacy. When at last  
they set out Vinh Thai was left behind, in  
charge of radio propaganda. He was unable,  
therefore, to return to his father, but he was  
given time, before the coming of Mao Tse-tung,  
to recover his ancestral roots.

That is the story of this book. The adventure,  
however, is of the mind, which is doubtless why





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HARRAP



the mission felt Vinh Thai was not 'serious'. Nothing much happens, and the people who throng these pages never become quite real. The Pasha, the Princess, the Hermit, Monsieur Oui

—for all their animations they do but decorate a screen. The picture is amusing, entrancing; yet all the time we are really focussed on the small details with eyes which, through this writer's

exact vision, have become Chinese. How enchanting it is! we exclaim; but because this is a poet's book, how very queer, how disturbing! Fortunately, it has been translated by a poet.

## New Novels

**Pincher Martin.** By William Golding. Faber. 15s.

**Image of a Society.** By Roy Fuller. Andre Deutsch. 13s. 6d.

**The Occupying Power.** By Gwyn Griffin. Angus and Robertson. 15s.

**The Pike in the Reeds.** By James Kinross. Murray. 16s.

IN the end, surely, literature comes closest to law. It, too, boils down to the matter of doing justice. Didn't the Elizabethans reduce the better part of rhetoric to a justice of words, and call it decorum? Higher up, there is the attempt to do justice to men, and even gods. Not, of course, by any statutory code—laws of Medes and Persians have no pretence to justice, only to order. Rather, each case has to be weighed singly on its merits, and the classics, like the classics of law, are not edicts but precedents: *Karenin v. Karenina*, *Rex v. Falstaff*, *Nemesis v. Atreides*. As in common law, it is the hearing that matters; for the judgement depends on the circumstances, and if the hearing is full and fair, the verdict is implied in it. A definition of literature might be the treatment of words as both evidence and verdict simultaneously. Perhaps that is why so many serious writers as well as readers have turned from poetry to novels. It is years—thirty or more—since poetry had time or room for justice. The radical effect of reviving the Metaphysicals has been not wit, but its brevity. Donneishness, all chisel and decision, has imposed itself even on the rebels from it; it serves well enough for epitaphs and entiments, but its summary verdicts squeeze out evidence. Verse has become a small Star Chamber of prophets and humorists, whose crafts scorn substantiation. Justice is everything excluded by contemporary poetic canons: a patient, impersonal, digressive art.

Ordinarily, it would be pompous to drag the nature of literature into discussion of the fortnight's fiction. *Pincher Martin* pardons and demands it. William Golding's third novel proves him (as *Lord of the Flies* didn't quite, to me) a literary artist to be discussed with the utmost seriousness. Really, one should say a poet; but the point is that poetry could no longer give him court-room for what he has achieved here: a tragedy, like the earliest, of man performing justice on himself. It is about an ordeal which also is a trial. Flung on a naked scaffold of rock in the Atlantic, his shoddy, desperate hero fights, against a deaf infinity of sea and solitude, the case of his right to survive. Horribly, the prosecuting elements drive his body down the rungs of evolution to the level of the jellies and molluscs which share his toehold on existence. Inside, his darting mind, racing against disintegration, scuttles and rummages among the refuse of memory for the evidence of what he has been.

He has been Pincher. Presumably the title is the lower-deck nickname, cruelly just, which he evades telling his captain. He has always snatched his wants from life: the soft berths, the friends' wives, the fat parts in provincial reps where he peddled his profile before the war. Now, he is Pincher in another sense: a pair of anguished claws, clutching what remains—the rock, the fraying thread of sanity, life itself. But Judgement arrives in the image of his clothed dignity—it may even be That in whose image his dignity was made—prizes loose his frantic hold, washing him away 'in a compassion that was timeless and without mercy'. The

case is lost, as for salvation's sake, the author implies, it must be; but the real verdict is the chords of myth which linger about, echoes of Lear, Jonah, Melville's Ahab. The burden of evidential meaning sometimes strains Mr. Golding's prose to dilation, but he has done memorable justice to his shabby Prometheus, and to his high theme.

Roy Fuller is a professional poet who also has sought the judicious breadth of a novel to do justice to a large subject. His theme is England now, seen in the sooty microcosm of a Midland building society. At least, *Image of a Society* sets out as if to fulfil its title, but loses its way somewhere. One hopes for a Breughel panorama of the way we live now—the crowded trams, the gin-and-sports-coat tipplers, the prams sunning before Woolworth's, the Teds lounging against the tiled Odeon. Instead Mr. Fuller provides an interesting, sensitive gallery of lonely, slightly sallow portrait sketches.

They never add up to a society, and this appears to be Mr. Fuller's point. Industrial capitalism, personified in the drowsy hive of the Saddleford Building Society, becomes in his pages an avid machine, crushing its servants either into economic automata or desperate introverts. There is the burly, sensual mortgage manager whose mind is ruled by lust for promotion; the delicate, parent-ridden company solicitor who loathes his work; and nothing in between. We are meant, apparently, to sympathise with the solicitor, who goes in for some naively Marxist introspection after hours, and declares that the moral content of his firm's transactions forbids both loyalty and literature. Mr. Fuller appears to agree. That is to say, he reserves his poet's powers—sharp imagery, subtlety of analysis—for descriptions of his characters' inner, private lives. The business which engages them he chronicles with odd flatness, in a brown correspondence school prose. Again, this may express his attitude to his subject; but it makes mottled reading, like embroidery on a serge suit. It would be a mistake, I think, to identify Mr. Fuller with his hero's Marxist dabblings. His emotional involvement is with individuals, and he writes of social forms as if it were a duty. Well, for a novelist I suppose it is; but so is justice. Mr. Fuller's verdict on society—any society, I suspect—though understandable, is as partial and prejudged as Thoreau's.

It is odd how shadowy Mr. Fuller's Saddleford, rooted in drizzling Midland reality, seems beside the far-fetched, entirely mythical community in *The Occupying Power*. Even at home, Mr. Fuller keeps something of the poet's strangeness in a world he never made. Gwyn Griffin clearly revels in joyous autocracy over a world he has made up in every detail, from geology to postage stamps. He has invented an Italian colony off the Somali coast, in the Indian Ocean; equipped it with a short history of slave-trading and rococo Latin misgovernment; planted it with citrus and bananas; populated it with a polyglot stew of Arab shopkeepers, Indian fishermen, Italian planters, Nubian policemen,

and half-caste prostitutes; and occupied it, in April, 1940, with a small force of British troops. Their power is absolute. To their commander, Euan Lemonfield, as to his creator, Baressa becomes a gigantic pink and green toy, its comic-opera populace revolving docilely 'as clockwork puppets to his command.

His command is happiness. Slowly, from his Firbank opening, Mr. Griffin leads deftly into a serious purpose. My first warning was the name of his voluble, serpentine female chief of the ostrich-plumed Keystone police guard: Mrs. Taminetto. One by one, Mozartian harmonies accumulate and darken; behind the charivari rise shadowy symbols of good and evil. *The Occupying Power* is a Utopia: a wistful, very modern one, not much concerned with political forms, but content to find happiness simply in sun, colour, good-humour, and peace. Above all, peace; Colonel Lemonfield's chief care for his oasis on a burning planet soon becomes to protect it from busy, jealous brass hats determined to force his carefree charges on to a 'war footing'. Reality keeps breaking through, and finally inflicts a wound which proves fatal: a sinister nazi prisoner escapes, killing one of the young English officers. The German reaches Berlin just in time for the holocaust in the Chancellery bunker; on Baressa, another, simultaneous, *Götterdämmerung* sweeps Colonel Lemonfield away, ending the dictatorship of white magic which healed and shielded his island. Mr. Griffin mourns, but does not try to hide, that in a modern world both extremes, Berlin and Baressa, hold tragic seeds of impossibility. He is still a gaily confident, rather than an economical, writer. But his profound little tragi-comedy is immensely readable; and it achieves a reality of which justice does not seem a fanciful word to use.

It is easier, of course, to invent a reality to fit justice, than fit justice to reality. James Kinross' novel, *The Pike in the Reeds*, is an honest attempt to judge the German people; but, inevitably, attempts to judge a whole people involve a summary way with individuals. Mr. Kinross' characters, English and German, end by becoming cardboard types of gullibility and deceitfulness. This is a pity, for they begin as recognisable human beings. His story falls into two parts. A young English captain, wounded and captured by the Germans in Crete, is saved by a friend's unselfish boldness from the slow horrors of prison camp, and given special treatment at a German hospital, where he falls in love with one of the nurses. After the war, he returns to find her, only to be hideously betrayed and disillusioned. The first half seems to me very good: the descriptions ring vividly true, as does the subtlety with which Mr. Kinross suggests an element of weakness in the boy's surrender to kindness, of morbidity in the girl's fascination with a prostrate enemy. But the second half falls into melodrama. Prosecutors have to concern themselves with crimes rather than people, and for all his attempts at fairness, Mr. Kinross ends as a prosecutor rather than a judge.

RONALD BRYDEN



# CRITIC ON THE HEARTH

Weekly comments on B.B.C. programmes by independent contributors

*Television Broadcasting*

## DOCUMENTARY

### In a Philistine Land

ALMOST, IT WAS 'buried treasure' week. There was the Dartmoor programme with that title. There was 'Look', in which we saw African elephants 'divining' precious water in a drought. There was a visit to the Wallace Collection, where, for all that millions of surrounding Londoners care, some of the nation's prized art objects might be hidden in the cellars. There were the not utterly irrelevant implications of 'Saturday-Night Out' on the Goodwin Sands. Not that there was gleaming fairy gold for us in any of the programmes. The prehistoric people of Dartmoor were made to seem even more dead than the average panel-game audience. Gazing on a thirsty elephant is not my idea of visual bliss. Some lovely things are on view at the Wallace Collection but they are best enjoyed in contemplation. There is no

species going delicately about that business with his trunk as detector. The theory is that his sense of smell does the trick. His behaviour, as we saw it, is as solemn as that of a diviner with a twig. It was as if he knew, like a human dowser, that he might at any moment receive that startling electric intelligence of water down below. The programme had the advantage of the quiet authority of Mervyn Cowie, director of the Royal National Parks of Kenya, answering questions put to him by Maxwell Knight. His genial unassertiveness fell pleasantly on a critical ear.

As an exercise in B.B.C. technical virtuosity, 'Saturday-Night Out', taking us to the South Goodwin lightship, was an impressive demonstration of enterprise and progress in the Outside Broadcasts Department. The arrangements which rewarded our multitudinous gaze with a continuously good picture during a complex ship-to-shore transmission were admirable. The smooth gliding passage of the Dover lifeboat across the floodlit waters, the interviews with



As seen by the viewer: Madame de Pompadour by Boucher, shown by Sir Gerald Kelly in his tour of 'The Wallace Collection' on November 22

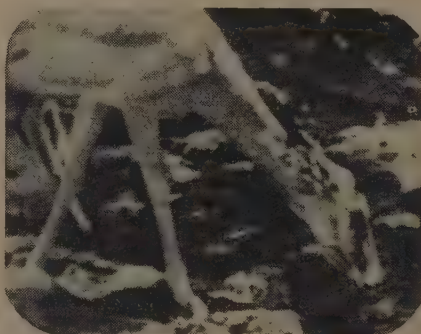
with an unusually awkward mission. He relieved us of what in other hands might have been a sense of anxious emergency.

A new series of documentaries, called 'First Hand', is to recall national events within living memory with the help of film, photographs, and eye-witness interviews. The opening programme told the story of that memorable first Atlantic flight in 1919 by the two young Englishmen, Alcock and Whitten Brown, which added considerably to the jubilations of the great Peace Procession crowds in London a few days later. It was a model programme and that not merely because it dispensed with background music. It was compact, neat and efficient, wasting neither words nor time. Early newsreel stuff gave us fascinating glimpses of the infancy of aviation. Justice was done to Lord Northcliffe's visionary encouragement, though the programme got the amount of his first Channel flight prize wrong. It was £1,000, not £500. The producer of the series is Paul Johnstone, which means that we expect this good start to be maintained.

The economics of authorship and book publishing were presented to viewers in two programmes last week, 'Facts and Figures', and 'Special Enquiry' the following night, where the theme was part of a survey attempting to answer the question: Do we in this country care whether the arts flourish or not? 'Facts and Figures', illustrated by Alfred Wurmser's diagrammatic ingenuities, did not sufficiently notice paper-back sales, which are important in our present cultural scene and offset the decline



'Look' on November 21: left, an African elephant in search of water; right, an impala finding it



greater disturber of that sort of peace than Sir Gerald Kelly, bringing his old Etonian aesthetic to bear on a Fragonard girl's 'beautiful little bottom'. As for 'Saturday-Night Out', it made us glad on the whole that we were in.

Part of the dullness of the Dartmoor programme was supplied by Glyn Daniel, the interviewer, who put his questions to the experts, Lady Fox and Malcolm Spooner, in a routine tone of voice that was hardly a compliment to them or to us. The better part of 'Buried Treasure: The Prehistoric People of Dartmoor' was the film evidence of considerable past habitation of what is now wind-swept solitude. There was no mention of the legend that one of the stone circles is supposed to consist of nine maidens who have been given lithic immortality; and is it not a fact that more imposing buried treasure has been found in those mounds and barrows than the pots we were shown the other night? Why Dartmoor archaeology should be less glamorous than that displayed in some other programmes of the series may have little to do with the spirit of place.

The 'Look' programme had a striking announcement to make to those of us who are not well up in African natural history, namely, that but for the extraordinary water dowsing of the elephant much animal and bird life might become extinct in the drier parts of the country. The elephant has an infallible instinct for discovering water and we saw film of one of the

captain and crew, the boarding of the light vessel and the talks with the men who keep her vigil, all this was television doing what comes naturally to it, transmitting the living scene. After such a programme, returning us to the studio is anti-climax, proof that the Outside Broadcasts Department has no need to be discouraged by our errant applause for such fabrications as, say, 'Find the Link'. There should be a word of commendation for Raymond Baxter who showed infinite resource as the commentator



'First Hand'—photographs and film of the Alcock-Brown Atlantic flight, shown on November 20: left, Lieutenant (later Sir) Arthur Whitten Brown and Captain (later Sir) John Alcock; right, their Vickers-Vimy aircraft after crashing upon landing in Ireland

Photographs: John Curia



in other sectors. It told us that there has been a substantial increase in the sales of books on art and architecture, another not-bad sign. 'Special Enquiry', taking a holiday from its industrial and sociological preoccupations, took all art as its province. It gave us much that was interesting to look at and more, as usual, to think about. Robert Reid's commentary labours were reasoned, well-balanced, and fair. They did not finally shake our conviction that this is a Philistine land.

REGINALD POUND

## DRAMA

### Pillars of Variety

NOW THAT THE DAY of rest is a non-stop caterwauling, one may be forgiven sometimes for thinking it is Sunday when it is but Saturday still. Settling down to watch Ibsen's early play about the city humbug discomfited, 'Pillars of Society', I was surprised to see advancing down the stage towards me a boisterous couple, she all feathers, he all red nose and comic hat, who, enlarging, were recognisable as Tessie O'Shea and Jimmy Wheeler. 'How', he asked the lady, 'is your honky-tonky?' This she took to mean her stomach which she pulled in with a reply to the effect that it was not so dusty, 'thank you, Conky' (a reference to Mr. Wheeler's profile). And so on. 'Not quite Ibsen', I thought, persisting in error. It was not till I had seen quite a lot of this variety bill that I realised that I was, as they say, 'twenty-four hours previous'.

Next night I tried again. The 'curtains' parted and a hidden choir chanted 'Sally, Sally, marry me, Sally', and anon, raucous and fiercely matey, 'our Gracie', as it is *de rigueur* to call her, came triumphantly stepping it. For the next twenty minutes she gave us the works: Christopher Robin saying his prayers; the little boy in a tammy being sick; and 'the biggest aspidistra in the world' (can Miss Fields have been calling it 'aspidistra' all these years?). Again not Ibsen, though in these days of Brecht and Barrault, you never know what a producer might not throw in.

At length I saw the error of my ways when after yet another-plug for 'Fanny', 'Pillars of Society' (*Stamfundets Stötter*) actually got going—and at a break-neck speed, too. It is a good play, punching its moral firmly home. But like 'An Enemy of the People' it has been so rinsed by later dramatists to provide them with their plays exposing humbug that one now rather fails to appreciate its originality.

The translation used was Max Faber's. Translating Ibsen has always been hard. Some translators are too finicky. Mr. Faber does not err in that direction. These Norwegians of 1877 spoke the good English of Broadway musicals. The old style: 'Why, yes, yes, indeed I concur, Mrs. Eggnog' was very irksome. Mr. Faber plumps for simpler versions: 'Yep, I certainly do'. The only trouble is that this seems not to issue convincingly from the dunreary whiskers and tightly buttoned rock-coat. But it probably sells the play to a contemporary audience more easily. In spite of a speed which I thought excessive and one at which it was impossible to give the characters any patina, the moral of the piece was well established.

Some performances were more convincing than others. Those who seemed to me to be living quite naturally in the Ibsenite world were

Margaret Vines as Mrs. Bernick, Michael Warre—very believable as the brother who comes back from the States and lets the cat out of the bag—Maureen Pryor as Marta, Charles Lloyd Pack as the canting school-master, and a couple of gossips—Nan Munro and Ilona Ference. But neither John McCallum as the respected citizen with a load of secret guilt nor Valerie White as Lona Hessel, the girl who in the strange phrase is regarded as 'no better than she ought to be', seemed to be in quite the same play. He was enigmatically stiff, as if in fancy dress and more worried about his whiskers and his waistcoat than his destiny; she, like an impersonation of Tallulah Bankhead by Miss Binnie Hale, seemed radically post-1918. David Markham and Gerald Cross, though going at the job cleverly enough, were apt to be shown up by the X-ray eye of the camera as young men carrying on like old. Guy Shepard's design allowed for a convincing looking verandah, bathed in the cool glare of a Norwegian summer: a Tissot picture come to life. Otherwise Stephen Harrison's production was not very memorable visually, with rather stiffly and indeed oddly disposed groups. In small rooms (as they have in provincial Norway, no doubt) it may not be possible to avoid these confrontations, stomach to stomach, like two railway engines meeting. Somehow in real life people denouncing each other usually keep a little more air and space between them. By and large I enjoyed it—partly because of those false starts: which only goes to show how a little looking forward may whet your appetite and how a non-stop, spoon-feed may fatally wear it down.

The Canadian play, 'The Magic Life', a case of off with the rattle-taggle gypsies for a glum old preacher's stage-struck daughter, was a very mild case of melodrama; the only twist was that the prodigal daughter did not go home at the end. Robert Kemp's Edinburgh romp, inevitably parochial, is still amusing outside. Although reprimanded for doing so before, I shall repeat that I have much enjoyed Durbidge's 'The Other Man', and until that terri-



Valerie White as Lona Hessel and John McCallum as Carsten Bernick in 'Pillars of Society' on November 25

fyng last five minutes at Miss Walters' I did not spot the murderer.

PHILIP HOPE-WALLACE

### Sound Broadcasting

## DRAMA

### Alarums and Excursions

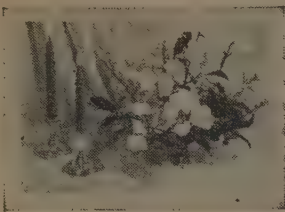
IT CANNOT BE entirely coincidental that 'The African Queen' and 'Heart of Darkness' have arrived in the Home Service so close to each other. I took my passage on the flat-bottomed steam-launch *African Queen* last Saturday night. If the story had been by any other current novelist than C. S. Forester (the radio play is by John Keir Cross) my heart might have failed: the delights of a river journey through the jungle, with two passengers only, could pall. It was, I suppose, ungrateful of me even to suspect this, with two such artists as Celia Johnson and Deryck Guyler as the voyagers; but I have always been dubious about long theatrical duologues. True, here there would be a naval lieutenant-commander to look in at the last, and I reflected that the *African Queen* herself might be almost a fourth character—as it proved, not altogether silent. She puffed and wheezed and clanked to some purpose.

There it was. We set off into the heart of darkness on a journey as perilous as Sard Harker's across Santa Barbara. The missionary was dead: his prim sister and the Cockney engineer churned away down stream. Before we knew where we were, Rose was proposing to force the boat through to the great lake on a wild obstacle race, and to sink what Charlie called the 'Louisa', the patrolling German gunboat. (Period: first world war). 'We've got to do our bit', said Rose with fanatical resolution. They did. For a time the play held, though towards the rapids—which sounded like the Victoria Falls themselves—one began to pine for other voices. Agreed, Celia Johnson had a beautifully direct approach to the commander-in-chief, and Deryck Guyler, whether lamenting the jettison'd gin (the Demon Rum), grappling with the propeller, or covered in leeches,



'Festival Fever' on November 22 with (left to right) Mairhi Russell as Annie, Stanley Baxter as Vassili Gortchakovitch, Michael Denison as Edward de Trouville-Delaney, Rona Anderson as Elizabeth, and Susan Richmond as Miss Urquhart-Innes





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(BLOCK LETTERS)

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kept us in touch with the Cockney Alhutt who slides into 'Charlie'. It was managed as well as it could have been; if after fifty minutes I was longing for somebody to recite Mark Antony's oration, or a postman to arrive on board with a double letter from Northamptonshire, that was simply because of a personal allergy to the two-character play.

There was also a certain feeling of surfeit. In the book and probably in the film (which I did not see) the disasters to the *African Queen* were fully charted for us. But when a radio play presses incident upon incident with little pause, the readiest imagination can be over-worked: one needs a few more points of rest. Given so, the night will keep the memory. Its last quarter of an hour conquered; Celia Johnson spoke movingly the prayer, 'I ask Thee to look with further favour on this voyage of Thine *African Queen*...' The final anti-climax made its effect, though one would willingly have murdered the owner of the third voice when it came. For his lieutenant-commander, Denis Gough used amusingly a trace of the intonation that we used to attribute to Pilot Officer Prune. Under Charles Lefeaux' direction it was as exacting (and sometimes an exciting) night. If I did not feel I had experienced the full voyage of the *African Queen*—now and then I found myself looking at the radio set and not at the angle—there were undeniably passages when, with Rose and Charlie, I was in the old tub myself, passing from hazard to hazard and observing how a strange affection ripened.

After this I ought surely to have listened to Noah's Flood', one of three mystery plays in the second instalment of 'The First Stage' (Third). Misadventure brought me to the set too late, in time only for the gravely compassionate 'Abraham and Isaac'—a blend of three versions, one of which, from Chester, I had heard memorably in the Refectory of Chester Cathedral. It was spoken on radio with fine directness by Howard Marion-Crawford's Abraham and John Forrest's Isaac ('Smite me not heavily with thy sharp sword'). Listeners need not approach this series expecting only the earliest pipe of half-awakened birds: they will be deeply and often unexpectedly touched.

No doubt it was unwise of me to go from this to 'Time Out of Mind' (Light). Geoffrey Trease has had a promising notion, an idealistic headmaster's refusal to turn his ancient free grammar school into one of the new public schools that sprouted so richly in the mid-Victorian period. There was an ingenious kink in the plot, no less cunning for being foreseen (and relished) by those of us ranged behind the headmaster from the first. But, as the play wore on, I began to wish that the dramatist had worked in tones other than ivory and jet. The headmaster was so mildly honest, the unpleasant governor so aggressively insolent (and certainly not under-acted). Other characters were pencil outlines, especially the girl who quite obviously was not in the play simply to learn Greek. It says much for Mr. Trease that he could make us violently partisan, but the piece could have done with more subtlety in writing and playing. 'The Shining Hour' (Light), with Mary Wimbush's forcible Mariella, is the Keith Winter play of the Yorkshire farmhouse, the man who loved his brother's wife, and the storm without that is a reasonable accompaniment to the emotional storm within. It remains an artfully manoeuvred drama both for sound and sight.

J. C. TREWIN

## THE SPOKEN WORD

### De-Stalinisation

AT MOMENTS like the present, one is apt to feel that it is idle to express any opinions unless one has all the facts before one, 'which', as the Euclid

of one's school-days was accustomed to remark, 'is impossible'. In this state of mind I found it some consolation to hear some of the problems facing us soberly and authoritatively discussed in the shortened version of the Fifty-One Society's fifth meeting of the current session, at which Isaac Deutscher was the guest speaker.

The subject was 'Russia after Stalin'. Some of the members had recently visited Poland and Russia and so were in a position to put forward intelligent views and questions to which Mr. Deutscher replied with the clearness and judgement of a man who has thought profoundly on the subject. The broadcast lasted an hour, and it kept me engrossed throughout. It was not only the present position in Russia, Poland, and Hungary that was discussed, but Communism in general. When one speaker asked how democracy could emerge from the one-party system Mr. Deutscher strikingly replied that our own democracy had emerged in the course of centuries from the rule of the state, and he also declared that a one-party system was not a basic element in Communism and that Lenin himself had made it clear that it was a temporary expedient in Russia. When another speaker doubted that democracy could emerge in a country like Russia, in which there had never been an effective liberal group, Mr. Deutscher pointed out that Russia had never, until now, had an industrial society. He is convinced that de-Stalinisation is a genuine movement and has little doubt that it will now progress rapidly. Finally, when a speaker asked what Mr. Deutscher considered to be the most helpful attitude that we could take up—and by 'we' he presumably meant the West—Mr. Deutscher replied: 'Let the evolution go through with as little disturbance as possible'.

Three separate talks, one in the Home Service and two in the Third Programme, described other kinds of evolution in this country. In 'The Law of Parent and Child' a barrister spoke of the gradual changes in the rights and duties of parents and described the present-day powers of the welfare state to take over the control and care of children. In earlier days the parent's right was absolute, the child was merely a chattel. Today the child's welfare is paramount in the eyes of the law, but there may be cases, the speaker remarked, in which the parent may require protection from the child. Many parents of young families will doubtless echo this sentiment, more especially after six o'clock in the evening.

In 'Crime and the Accused: 1550-1850' Mr. J. Prichard contrasted the ways in which the interests of an accused person are safeguarded today with his position in the days of the Tudors, when he was given no prior notice of the case against him, was denied the right to call witnesses in his favour, and suffered under many other disabilities. It was a gloomy picture, but Mr. Prichard warned us that it was drawn from records of treason trials in Tudor times, when the prevalence of plots against the state caused this crime to be treated with extreme severity. 'Crime and Protection', a talk by B. N. Bebbington, Chief Constable of Cambridge, dealt with the punishment of crime and the protection both of the criminal and the public. Only 150 years ago the punishment for picking pockets or stealing goods from a bleaching-yard was death. Today punishment is designed to be reformative, not retributive. Each of these talks, though they suffered from a lack of liveliness in their delivery, was full of useful and interesting information, and left one with the conviction that there has been an immense improvement in the treatment of misdemeanour and crime even if, as some people like to maintain, there is no such thing as human progress.

'Six Virtues for Authors' has produced some good talks. J. Middleton Murry's on 'Genero-

sity', given a fortnight ago, was especially fine, one of the best talks of its kind I have heard for many a day, and the same can be said of Professor L. C. Knights' last week on 'A Proper Self-Love', in which he pointed to Wordsworth as the great example of his theme in his acceptance of the terrors of Nature and the mystery of life. Blake in his poem 'The Tyger' was another example, and George Herbert in the poem called 'Affliction'. In this talk criticism, it seemed to me, was performing its most important function.

MARTIN ARMSTRONG

## MUSIC

### Puccini's Triptych

IT IS ODD that so experienced a man of the theatre as Puccini, with his instinct for what would 'go', should ever have supposed that the three one-act operas he assembled in 'Il Trittico' would permanently hang together. The mistake was, in part, due to a passing theatrical fashion, the vogue of the *Grand Guignol* which presented three pieces in a programme—something horrifying, something sentimental, and a farce. Here was a scheme that tempted Puccini to display the varied facets of his genius, and especially his powers of comedy. Each of the three operas is, in its own kind, a consummate example of his dramatic skill. And yet they have not stayed together consistently.

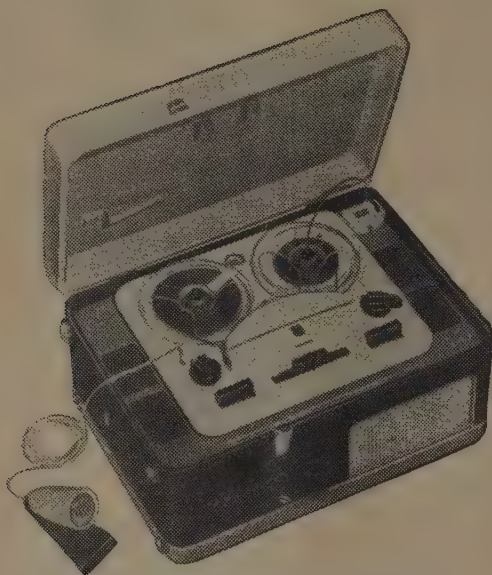
It was, therefore, a good idea for the Third Programme to give us an opportunity of hearing the three pieces on one evening—an event which has not, I think, occurred in England since 'Suor Angelica' was withdrawn after its second performance at Covent Garden. This anecdote—all three pieces are but anecdotes—of the nun of good family who had been cloistered because she had borne an illegitimate child, is the crux of the matter. This is the sentimental third of the *Grand Guignol* scheme, and, like so many pieces that play upon our emotions, it will not really bear examination. It would be wrong to accuse Puccini of indulging in false sentiment, still more of insincerity. He was never more sincere. He was especially devoted to his sister who had taken the veil, and, in order to assure himself that he had got the atmosphere right, he went to the convent and played through some of the opera to the assembled nuns, who with tears in their eyes absolved Sister Angelica of her sin.

Puccini had, indeed, got the atmosphere right. But that atmosphere of slow, unchanging life, in which no day differs from the next and where nothing more exciting can happen than the punishment of a nun for inattention, or the visit of a relative, is not the stuff of which drama can readily be made. Puccini creates wonderfully this atmosphere of orderly and uneventful existence. The score has an exceptional transparency and sweetness, as we could hear in the beautiful performance directed by Previtali, but, until the end, is free of sickly emotionalism that many listeners find distasteful in, for instance, 'Madam Butterfly'. But the slow and even tempo of the music and, particularly in a broadcast, the difficulty of making out which of the many minor characters is singing, militates against its theatrical effect.

There is in this even-flowing piece the one terrific scene—that is the point of the whole thing—when Sister Angelica begs her cold and disapproving aunt for news of her son. This hysterical outburst, built up, as was Puccini's custom, over a repeated and cumulative *ostinato* in the orchestra, did not come off as well as usual through some failure of tension, on the part of the singer, Rosanna Carteri, who nevertheless sang appealingly in the final scene. The aunt, wonderfully drawn by Puccini with a few, sure strokes, was presented in all her hardness



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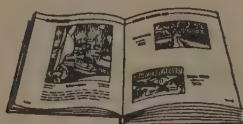
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heart, with only a flicker of human feeling when Angelica faints, by Miti Truccato Pace, a skillful singer of such character parts. 'Il Tabarro' has fared rather better than 'Suor Angelica', because the obvious effectiveness of its lurid *crime passionnel* holds the audience more surely than the chatter of nuns, whose illu and attitude to life anyhow fail to 'ring a bell' in a non-Catholic country. It is not, however, the lurid anecdote but the marvellous creation of its setting that arouses admiration. Never was Puccini's hand surer than in its application of the touches of colour and of characterisation with which he built up this nocturnal Parisian quay. The picturesqueness and

the squalor of the scene, the aspirations and frustrated nostalgia of its inhabitants are presented with an economy of means and an exact calculation of effect that surely justify the word 'genius'. The only flaw, from the musico-dramatic point of view, is that Giorgetta, splendidly represented by Clara Petrella, uses a musical idiom that is altogether too polite, too 'high-class' for the wife of a bargee. Michele is, however, completely convincing, and he was well realised, if with rather too many explosions of final syllables, by Antenore Reale.

Of 'Gianni Schicchi', the most successful of the three pieces, it is unnecessary to say much, except that it deserves its popularity. That it

would hardly have achieved it without Verdi's example in 'Falstaff' is neither here nor there. For, though Puccini adopts Verdi's technical methods in building up ensembles for a large number of characters and presents his two young lovers in snatches of sweet lyrical music in exactly the same way as Nanetta Ford and Fenton are presented, he was no plagiarist. He made Verdi's processes his own—or almost always. For I did catch in the music of the Suora Zelatrice (the Sister Monitor), rebuking her errant charges in the convent, echoes, no doubt unconscious but distinct, of Melitone in 'La Forza del Destino'.

DYNELEY HUSSEY

## Towards the Psychology of Stravinsky's Genius

By HANS KELLER

Stravinsky will conduct his Symphony in C, Symphony of Psalms, and 'Pulcinella' at 8.0 p.m. (Home) and 9.15 p.m. (Third) on Wednesday, December 5, and again at 8.0 p.m. on Friday, December 7 (Third). The first English performance of his 'Canticum Sacrum' will be broadcast at 8.15 p.m. on Tuesday, December 11 (Third)

IN his penetrating though often fallacious *Philosophie der neuen Musik* (Tübingen, 1949), Theodor W. Adorno plays off Schönberg against Stravinsky whom he calls a death-mask of the past. Professor Adorno usually knows what he is talking about, but his talk is not always equal to his knowledge, chiefly because it is not inspired by that respect for a great genius without which the truest observation on him lacks perspective.

The fact remains that Stravinsky's creative character in general, and his attitude to the past in particular, has proved a headache to most musicians and critics, for the simple reason that have never encountered this kind of great composer before. All good composers start out on the past; most bad composers remain stuck in it; but Stravinsky is the first great creator who speaks through it.

Where history fails, psychology must take its place. The problem of Stravinsky's creative character is that of our time—the problem of aggression. But the problem of his aggression is, paradoxically enough, the problem of his love. Apropos of his treatment of Pergolesi's melodies in the ballet 'Pulcinella' (1919-20), Stravinsky asked: 'Should my line of action be dominated by my love or by my respect for Pergolesi's music? Is it love or respect that urges us to possess a woman? Is it not by love alone that we succeed in penetrating to the very essence of being? But then, does love diminish respect? Respect alone remains barren and can never serve as a productive or creative factor. In order to create, there must be a dynamic force, and that force is more potent than love?' He felt his 'conscience to be innocent of sacrilege' and moreover considered that his attitude towards Pergolesi was 'the only possible one towards the music of earlier ages'. Less known, but usually relevant, is Stravinsky's suggestion that Pergolesi may be justified by the creation of a child. Paul Valéry changed the metaphor: 'A lion consists of digested lambs'.

Psychoanalysis recognises two basic types of love, self-love apart. Genetically the more primitive is identification, which stems from the earliest, sucking stage of infancy and whose prototype is oral incorporation: hence the technical term 'introjection' for the 'absorption of the environment into the personality' (Ernest Jones); hence, too, Valéry's metaphor. The other type, 'object love', is what we commonly understand by love. In monosyllables, identification is based on the need to be someone, object love on the need to have someone. Identification is the more ambivalent of the two, not only

because you destroy what you eat, but also because you want to replace the person you want to be.

Ordinary artistic development always starts with identification: while the composer's own creative ego is still weak, he identifies himself with his teachers and with older masters and proceeds to imitate them. As his originality grows, these father figures recede or are absorbed by his conscience and, if nothing drastic happens (such as the Bach crisis in Mozart's life), his creative 'love relations' with the music of other composers amount to no more than sporadic flirtations resulting in, say, variations on another composer's theme, which will be children of 'object love' rather than of identification.

Alone amongst geniuses, with the possible exception of Picasso, Stravinsky has actually developed his capacity for identification together with the unfolding of his intense originality. At the same time, as his commentary on 'Pulcinella' indicates, his creative mind also employs a good deal of highly aggressive 'object love': he makes the aggressive best of both love worlds, though identification remains the basic 'dynamic force'. No previous composer has shown any desire to compose his way 'into the very essence of a being'.

And all men kill the thing they love,  
By all let this be heard,  
Some do it with a bitter look,  
Some with a flattering word,  
The coward does it with a kiss,  
The brave man with a sword!

There is some special pleading here, but there is a truth too. Stravinsky has in fact himself employed the bitter look, the flattering word, and the sword, but he has never killed the past by kissing it, as so many of his followers and other neo-classicists have done.

The two symphonies which he will conduct twice next week are extremely healthy children of his ambivalent identification with more than one past, and if the first movement of the Symphony in C (1939-40) is a little uneasy about its synthesis of Stravinsky's characteristic, undeveloping *ostinato* technique and classical sonata development, the resultant formal friction turns out to be as valid a part of the structure as is, for instance, Beethoven's un-operatic attitude in 'Fidelio'.

The 'Symphony of Psalms' (1930), on the other hand, does not even evince such seeming imperfections: it is a spotless and gigantic masterpiece, profoundly expressive in its very suppression of expressionism, its in-turned, self-

castigating aggression. Identifications with the past span a wide field, stretching back into the archaic, and when the opening four-part fugue of the second movement (with the answer in the dominant) raises its voice through what we might call the life-mask of Bach, we realise that the term 'neo-classicism' is just not good enough.

The severe limitations which Stravinsky's identifications impose upon his intense imagination are precisely what he wants. His urge towards formal stringency and simplicity goes beyond the requirements of unity and clarity: he does not discipline his inspiration; rather, he is more lavishly inspired by self-discipline than any other composer. Again, his love, this time his artistic self-love or self-respect, is unlike the usual artist's: again it is vehemently ambivalent, combined with, perhaps even outweighed by, aggression turned inward.

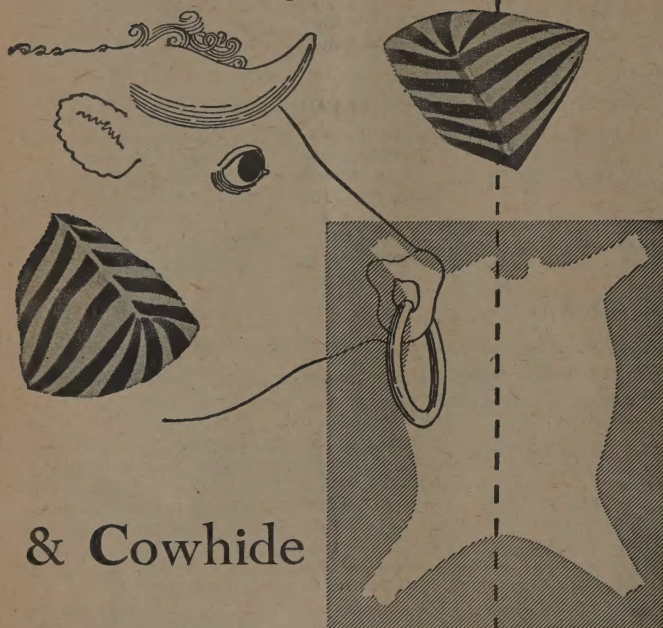
Symbolic of this self-restrictive, form-conscious simplicity is the fact that all three major works in next week's programme show cyclic devices on the one hand, and recognise C as their home tonality on the other (though two of them do not start out from home): no doubt the first concert programme of this kind in our entire history.

After Schönberg's death, and too late for Professor Adorno to revise his theory about the antithesis of Stravinsky's and Schönberg's attitudes, Stravinsky embarked on his serial period which has now culminated in his first twelve-tone music—the three middle movements of the 'Canticum Sacrum' (1955), whose first and fifth movements, moreover, mirror each other in self-restrictive retrograde motion. My own little hypothesis, on the other hand, here seems to receive its final confirmation. The 'identification of the ego with the lost object' (Freud, *Mourning and Melancholia*, 1916) is no news to the psychoanalyst, who will see in the previous ambivalent relation between the two musical leaders of our time an ideal foundation for Stravinsky's 'introjection' of Schönberg's method: by way of creative mourning, Stravinsky identified himself with Schönberg's serialism as soon as it had become a thing of the past. In justice to Professor Adorno, we must remind ourselves that his 'death mask of the past' now assumes a new significance, but we must continue to reject the negative evaluation implied in, or insinuated by, his formulation.

For the rest, great geniuses are few and far between, and we cannot afford to miss them when they come.



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# Broadcast Suggestions for the Housewife

## PASTEURISED MILK FOR SCONES

A LISTENER wishes to know whether stale pasteurised milk can be used for scones and cream cheese. She has noticed that when pasteurised milk is kept out of the refrigerator it develops an unpleasant smell, different from the usual sour smell associated with raw, curdled milk. This is true, because the acid-producing bacteria responsible for the souring and clotting of raw milk have been killed, along with the harmful bacteria, in the heating process, called pasteurisation. Other harmless heat-resistant bacteria survive pasteurisation, grow readily, and do give rise to unpleasant smells and off-flavours if the milk is left long in the kitchen. Many people use this material for scones and also for cream cheese. It is unlikely that it would be harmful in any way, but the taste of the cheese will be different from that of cheese made with sour raw milk; if necessary the taste could be disguised with something like lemon juice. But I am told that it is the acid in clotted raw milk which gives good scones—so there seems no particular advantage in the use of soured milk over fresh milk (except to use it up), because the scones would be equally good made with fresh milk and a separate acid. In fact, the usual cakes of baking powder contain sufficient tartaric acid—or a little added lemon juice might be helpful. But, in answer to the particular question, yes, you can use your clotted pasteurised milk for scones and cheese.

The reference to lemon juice brings me to another question. Is it safe to use the lemon juice sold in plastic containers or bottles, unopened, for drinks and food dressings? The sterner who asks this has always believed that foods or liquids preserved with sulphur dioxide should be well cooked. Certainly it is safe to use uncooked lemon juice and other fruit juices pre-

served with sulphur dioxide, which is present in low concentration to inhibit the growth of moulds and of some bacteria. Such juices are usually very acid, which is an added safeguard against bacterial growth. The use of sulphur dioxide is permitted in a number of products: orange juice for infant feeding, for example, contains approximately 350 parts per 1,000,000 in the concentrated state, but this is considerably diluted for drinking purposes. It may be used also in jam, dried fruit, dried vegetables, and potato powder, and also in sausages. In spite of the preservative, however, sausages should always be well cooked because in low concentration sulphur dioxide is not a powerful bactericidal agent but merely helps to prolong the shelf life for a few days. By the way, apparently not all the sulphur dioxide salt is lost in cooking, a small part remains behind, but it is harmless.

BETTY HOBBS

## KEEPING THE PUDDING DARK

A listener writes to say that she wants to be sure of a really dark Christmas pudding and asks can she colour it with gravy browning or even mix it with tea—like some fruit cakes. But why add artificial colouring at all? It is not necessary. What is needed for a dark pudding is long cooking time. Steam puddings for at least eight or nine hours, and then give them another couple of hours steaming on Christmas Day. The only justification for cutting down on this is the use of a pressure pan. You will find pressure cooking will take about two-and-a-half hours, plus about a quarter to half an hour on the day.

Ingredients, and time to mature, also help to make a dark pudding. So I would advise this listener to look for that very dark—almost black

—Barbados sugar. And she may find a recipe which calls for black treacle, or for a few prunes to be added to the sultanas, raisins, and currants.

LOUISE DAVIES

## SCALLOPS AND PINEAPPLE

Scallops are now of good quality and are fairly reasonably priced. To make a delicious dish, cut the scallops, and their orange roes, into chunks and spear them on a skewer, alternating with small rolls of fat bacon and cubes of canned pineapple. Brush with oil and grill till cooked through.

LOUISE DAVIES

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DARSIE GILLIE (page 865): *The Manchester Guardian* correspondent in Paris

AIR MARSHAL SIR VICTOR GODDARD, K.C.B. (page 867): R.A.F. Representative at Washington, 1946-48; Air Officer in charge of Administration, Air Command, South-East Asia, 1943-46; Chief of the Air Staff, New Zealand, and Commander, Royal New Zealand Air Forces, South Pacific, 1941-43

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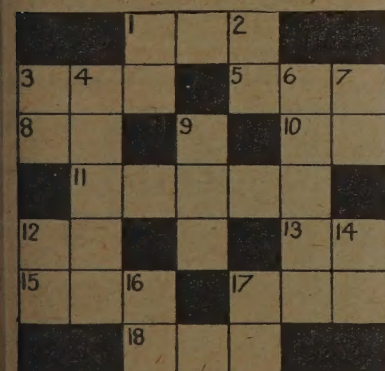
JAMES L. HENDERSON (page 877): Lecturer at the Institute of Education, London University

PHILIP LEON (page 878): Professor of Classics, University College, Leicester

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## By Scrap

The formula  $A = \sqrt{s(s-a)(s-b)(s-c)}$  gives the area  $A$ , of a triangle whose three sides are  $a$ ,  $b$ ,  $c$ , and where  $s = \frac{a+b+c}{2}$

Four sets of integral values of  $a$ ,  $b$ ,  $c$ ,  $s$  and  $A$  are denoted by  $\begin{matrix} a_1 & b_1 & c_1 & s_1 & A_1 \\ a_2 & b_2 & c_2 & s_2 & A_2 \end{matrix}$  etc.

Each of these sets satisfies the formula.

## CLUES

### Across

1.  $A_3$
3.  $3s_4$
5.  $10A_1 + a_2$
8.  $4a_3$
10.  $6c_2$
11.  $(2b_1)^3 - 1$
12.  $a_2$
13.  $c_3$
15.  $6s_3$
17.  $10s_2$
18.  $A_4$

### Down

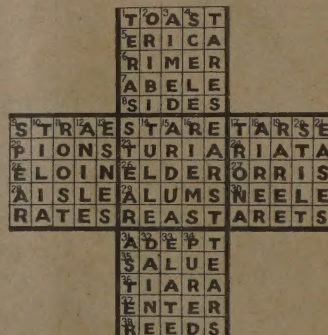
1.  $b_2$
2.  $4b_1$
3.  $a_4$
4.  $6A_2^2$
6.  $(b_4 + 2)^3 + 2$
7.  $2c_2$
9.  $30s_2$
12.  $a_1 + 1$
14.  $a_1$
16.  $c_1 + 1$
17.  $\frac{1}{2}s_4$

The following additional clues are given:

$$A_1 = A_2 = 4s_2$$

None of the four triangles is right-angled.

## Solution of No. 1,381



## NOTES

The eleven unclued lights are all anagrams of the theme word.

Across: 1. TO-A-ST. 5. ERIC-A. 7. A-BEL(U)E. 8. S-IDES. 23. AU(S)TRI(A) anag. 25. E-LOIN. 26. ELDER-GUN. 28. A-IS-LE. 30. Hidden. 31. AD-EPT. 37. ENTER-PRISE. 38. Watson's 'Hymn to the Sea'.

Down: 2. OR-IB(S). 3. AIM-ED. 4. SCHLE-RATE. 9. S-PEAR. 10. AI-LIT rev. 12. ALIEN anag. 13. SENSE rev. 14. L-TULE. 17. Hidden and Lit. 18. AI-RE-R. 19. RARE-E. 21. E-SEAS anag. 22. DA-IN-E. 33. ELA-TE. 34. PURE-D.

Prizewinners: 1st prize: A. R. A. Bates (Peterborough); 2nd prize: J. S. Eynon (Aberangell); 3rd prize: J. A. Pateman (London, N.W.3).



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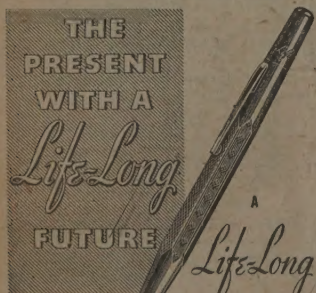
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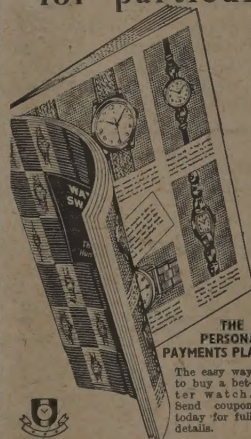
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